

SPEAKING TO DRY BONES: THE MISSIONAL
CHURCH OPERATING IN WORDS
OF KNOWLEDGE

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ABSTRACT

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The context of this project is the New Life Temple Church in Madisonville (Cincinnati), Ohio. The purpose of this project was to provide an active training model designed to integrate the gift of words of knowledge into the current missional church belief systems and practice. Comparison of pre-test and post-test results, participant journals, and focus groups were used to generate data. The results suggest participants prayed for the sick more often, saw an increase in the awareness/sensitivity of God's presence, and grew in the understanding of the charismata; specifically words of knowledge, and experienced increased levels of spiritual growth and boldness.

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Furthermore, I owe a debt of gratitude to Pastor Ralph Godfrey, Jr. the New Life Temple Church for offering up your gifts and graces to be a part of this endeavor and major undertaking. Likewise, I owe an immense amount of gratitude to Dr. Jon Ruthven and Dr. Luther Oconer for their assistance, guidance, counsel and mentoring throughout the project. In addition, I offer thanks to Dr. Tom Litteer, Dr. Peter Bellini and Dr. Felicia LaBoy for your invaluable input, insights and guidance as my professional associates throughout this process. Also, I want to thank those for serving and participating as context associates for this project.

Additionally, I want to thank all of the co-laborers of The Embassy International in Cincinnati, Ohio who supported me during my many absences due to my educational and work travel schedule. Lastly, I am grateful to my doctoral focus group members for their willingness to welcome me into their midst, accept me for who I am and walk with me throughout this period of growth and transition during this project.

PREFACE

The researcher proposed and initiated this project to test the efficacy of an introductory eight-week experiential healing and discipleship program of teaching, personal and group reflection, and praxis in Cincinnati, Ohio. While the EMC has been a gift to the Church Universal, the researcher feels that most of the methods endorsed by the movement mostly focus on relief work or works that deal with the material needs of people as well as social justice issues. Conspicuously missing is the miraculous work of the Holy Spirit (Charismata), which was so foundational to the birth, rise and spread of Christianity during the first century and, especially the last century. The lack of dependence and is striking. For a church to be an EMC, the church also needs to operate in the Charismata.

The researcher determined to measure the effectiveness of an eight-week training program intended to expose individuals to the gift of word of knowledge to see if such training would lead to an increased experience of hearing and discerning God's voice. Furthermore, the researcher wanted to measure the training's impact on the participants' ability to sense God's manifested presence and grow in their level of confidence in ministering to others they encounter in the marketplace.

This thesis allows for a deliberate look into a healing and discipleship ministry training program incorporated into the core EMC practices that believe every member is a minister and has a role and responsibility to co-labor with the *missio Dei*. This program provided a useful model of gift-based teaching and training, impartation, and activation.

When other missional communities and ministries introduce their leaders and members to this healing and discipleship-training model, they would begin experiencing the realities of the New Covenant Spirit in fresh and new ways, resulting in increased spiritual awareness, boldness, and confidence for marketplace encounters.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this study, first and foremost to my mother Maggie Roberts-Stanley, who outside of God has been the true rock in my life, my children Sir' Twon, Amber, and Gabriel. You are the best things that have ever happened to me. I pray for God's favor to forever rest upon you. I love you all.

ABBREVIATIONS

EMC	Emerging Missional Church
LXX	Septuagint
NLTC	New Life Temple Church
NASB	New American Standard Version of the Bible
NT	New Testament
OT	Old Testament
T.E.I.	The Embassy International

INTRODUCTION

The Lord GOD has given Me the tongue of disciples, That I may know how to sustain the weary one with a word. He awakens Me morning by morning, He awakens My ear to listen as a disciple. The Lord GOD has opened My ear; And I was not disobedient Nor did I turn back.

—Isaiah 50:4-5 NASB

One of the areas that are undergoing a major shakeup in this Reformation move of God is the reality of and the response to the realm of supernatural. The debates that previously were being held about this area are still going on in some sectors of the church. One camp holds that the miracles of the Bible were simply myths that held hidden spiritual messages to be sought out. Another camp says that the miracles did in fact occur but ceased once the “apostolic era” ended and Scripture was canonized; there is another group that says miracles signs and wonders did actually occur, that they never stopped occurring and are still occurring today through men and woman of God.

The belief that miracles and the associated spiritual gifts have ceased, known as cessationism, provides a very different perspective on the practice of discipleship compared to the position that embraces a New Testament model of the spiritual life that expects and exercises the gifts and power demonstrated by Jesus, the apostles, and the early church. In the NT, disciples were expected to continue the ministry that Jesus engaged in. This meant operating in signs and wonders, healing and deliverance.

Much of this debate commenced as a result of modernity or the time period known as the Age of Enlightenment. During this period, anything dealing with or connected to the supernatural or what we would refer to as the supernatural was denied and flatly rejected. The residue from that era still impacts a large segment of the church. However, we have entered into another period known as Post-modernity or the Post-modern period. Now the question isn't rather or not the supernatural occurs but rather can I experience it for myself?

The belief that miracles and the associated spiritual gifts have ceased, known as cessationism, provides a very different perspective on the practice of discipleship compared to the position that embraces a New Testament model of the spiritual life that expects and exercises the gifts and power demonstrated by Jesus, the apostles, and the early church.

If the cessationists are correct, then discipleship is a matter of faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord for the forgiveness of sins, the promise of eternal life, and empowerment to live an ethical life. If the New Testament model of proclaiming the presence of the kingdom of God, healing the sick, raising the dead, cleansing lepers, and casting out demons (Mt. 10:8) is available today, then it means a considerable transformation of who the church is and what it is called to do is in order.

Peter proclaimed, “But you are a Chosen Race, A royal Priesthood, A Holy Nation, A People For God’s Own Possession, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light” (1 Peter. 2:9).¹ Similarly, Paul comments, “For the kingdom of God is not a matter of talk but of power”

¹All Bible references are from the New American Standard Bible unless otherwise noted.

(1 Cor. 4:20). Not only has much of the church settled for a message of words only while ignoring or rejecting the demonstration of the presence of the kingdom of God with power. They have also sought to limit and restrict masses of individuals from operating in the same. Jesus stated, “But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, because you shut off the kingdom of heaven from people; for you do not enter in yourselves, nor do you allow those who are entering to go in” (Matthew 23:13).

This project tests a discipleship and healing ministry training model instructing the participants in how to pray for the sick through the incorporation of words of knowledge in the context of marketplace ministry. The eight-week training program teaches that miracles, signs, and wonders flow from a relationship with God as a normal function of Christian discipleship. Simply, what was available to the early church in the NT is available to the church and followers of Jesus today. God’s purpose of salvation (sozo) is the comprehensive healing and restoration of the whole person; salvation involves physical, emotional, and spiritual wholeness.

Chapter one lifts up the correlation of the researcher’s unique spiritual journey, the mission and purpose of TEI in Cincinnati, Ohio, and the divine connections that emerged to form a life net of relationships. It highlighted the divine occurrences that stirred the heart of a ministry leader with a passion for healing ministry within the marketplace and a community desperate for a demonstration of the kingdom of God through spiritual, emotional, and physical healing. God led the ministry leader (the researcher) to launch an apostolic and prophetic equipping center that was committed to a New Testament discipleship and healing model that emphasized what Jesus did and taught his disciples to do.

The second chapter establishes the biblical, historical, and theological foundations for the discipleship and healing ministry training program. Here the researcher provides biblical support for the incorporation of the charismata, miracles, signs, and wonders, and especially healing ministry as a continuation of Jesus' ministry. The history of the church throughout the generations' shows the impact of various individuals and groups that have experienced divine encounters, which led them to practicing supernatural ministry for the last 2,000 years. Lastly, a charismatic theology for equipping and empowering the church to walk in its delegated researchery and power as Priest of God in the marketplace so that the fullness of the kingdom of God and God's purpose of salvation can be seen.

Chapter three presents a review of several diverse research models that have helped to inform the construction and implementation of this ministry project. This chapter also spells out how the theoretical foundations merge into the practical ministry applications of the ministry training program.

Chapter four describes the action research model for the study, the reasons the particular qualitative method was chosen, and the data collection and analysis procedures. This chapter is an explanation of the skeletal structure or scaffold of the study necessary to generate and interpret the meaning of the data.

Chapter five records the field experience; simply what actually took place during the implementation of the experiment. Included are the specifics of the eight-week training program, the data collection methods and their analysis, the search for and evolution of the emergent codes, the findings, and outcomes. Chapter five provides the details for the framework provided and discussed in chapter four.

Chapter six contains the researcher's thoughts and reflections on the significance of the experiment, a brief summary of the elements of the training model, and concluding remarks as to the results of the study, insights into ways the project could be improved, and suggestions for further research in healing ministry. While this project was limited in scope and location to a few leaders of NLTC, the researcher is convinced similar results would occur in other missional Christian churches and communities who have taken seriously the mandate to bring healing and deliverance to the sick and oppressed.

CHAPTER ONE

MINISTRY FOCUS

The Journey: Functioning in Dysfunction

The researcher's story is an attempt to accurately identify God's fingerprints on a grace-filled life for the ultimate purpose of bringing God greater glory. Furthermore, it examines lineage, formative years, adolescence, young adulthood, marriage and relationships, ministry, and life altering encounters that brought trajectory shifts.

The researcher readily admits to a dysfunctional and flawed pedigree. Much of what is chronicled does not follow a particular script. There are many twists and turns that somehow managed to represent a spiritual tapestry connecting all the components. When he looked back over his life, he truly realized that the hand of God was always upon him. Through the plight that would become his journey; there was recognition that his life had been directed; even orchestrated by the hand of God. For him, life was simple and modest growing up in the rural south, living with his parents and two siblings. Born to two young, uneducated parents, struggle was looked upon as the normal way of existence. Obviously, normal could be defined in a variety of ways, depending on the situation and the context.

He really never knew much about his grandparents on either side, with little to no recollection of his father's parents. There were plenty of stories of his maternal grandfather, especially the moonshine running days, as well as a few pictures of him

kneeling while sampling his product out of a huge jug. Theses often bring smiles to the faces of those viewing the pictures. However, these were the only real memories of him that could be recalled.

The one grandparent that was present was his maternal grandmother. She was the anchor that held things together and the one who all of the grand kids feared but loved and adored. The memories of her praying and cooking Sunday meals on Saturday evenings, chasing anyone and everyone away from the kitchen were his fondest. Like young Timothy, the Apostle Paul's associate, his grandmother played an important part in his spiritual heritage. After suffering a stroke, her last days on earth were very painful to endure for the entire family. The researcher did not have the luxury of knowing all of his grandparents but this grandparent was more than able to stand in as a substitute.

His father was a seventeen-year-old farm worker, when the researcher was born. In that region, there were not a lot of options for individuals that were not educated. Having to go to work and assist in the support of one's family trumped getting a good education. As time went on, his father did find a job working at a local mill that was the major employer of their town. With only limited education, landing a job like this was a significant accomplishment.

Though his father seemed to have been a fairly dedicated and hard worker, time would reveal that was not the case. The long hour shifts, often done with little rest, were the pattern set for years to come. However, it was not all work and no play. For his father eventually started a local band that travelled to the surrounding clubs to perform.

The researcher has vivid memories of the band squeezing into the front room of their singe-wide trailer for practices before shows. One night, as the band practiced in this

home, the researcher and his older brother brought an abrupt end to it by setting a couch on fire. Left to their own devices, while playing with matches, the two thought it would be fun to see what would happen if a match was lit and placed under its bottom. Suffice it to say; that experiment went terribly wrong, and the fire lit to their backsides was evidence of that.

The funny thing is the person who took the most heat for the incident was his father, for bringing and placing the water-soaked couch back into the house. It just so happened that coincidentally it was raining that night. Throwing a blazing couch outside seemed like a good idea. To his mother not so much. Practice did resume that evening but the smell left from the burning couch was a constant reminder that all was not well. However, the laughter and chuckles from the band members brought everything back into focus; the upcoming performance.

The experiences of being around the band fueled his passion for music and unknowingly served as his introduction to club life. Yet, as time went on, it was this band that served as the greatest source of strife and contention between his parents, which was not revealed until several years later. But it was those moments that provided an escape from reality to many who were living in poverty and struggling to make ends meet. At least it was that way for him and his family.

Though his father was present, there were not a lot of fond memories that stand out or immediately come to mind. His mother on the other hand is another story. She was a fifteen-year old mother of one when the researcher was born. As she would later explain, during those days, there was no age limit or requirement for marriage. Therefore,

it was commonplace to see fourteen, fifteen or sixteen year olds married, struggling but married.

She would often say that she got married to leave home, not quite the ringing endorsement for love. Her background was similar to his father's, neither had a lot of education nor a strong family support system. Being the second oldest of seven (five girls and two boys) and her father's main source of farm help, her life was consumed with manual labor and care giving from an early age. School was a luxury that she enjoyed sporadically and sparingly.

Since the sons (her brothers), did not show up until later, the daughters had to stand in their stead and carry out the work that would have fallen to them. Girls were not excluded from chopping and carrying wood, hunting, and working in the field or any other tasks that needed to be accomplished in those days. And according to her, there was no rest for the weary. She often spoke about how they had to carry out these assignments before and after school on a daily basis. She often talked about the abuse that occurred during those times within the family and without.

As fate would have it while working one day in the field picking tobacco, she was introduced to a young man also working in the field. This meeting would ultimately change the course of both of their lives, as he would become her husband and she his wife. The two moved around a bit living in meager quarters during their early years together. However, they eventually would settle down in the small town of Odom, Georgia.

There was nothing elaborate about this southern town, as only four red lights controlled the resident traffic. It only had an elementary and middle school as high school

students were bused to the county high school. Beautiful Victorian homes lined Main Street, leading to and from the downtown area, as relics of the past. This was also the area where the recreation center was located that most of the youth sports and town activities took place.

As time went on, his father, now a fixture at the local mill began to establish stability, which had eluded them early on. His mother, a graduate from the local nursing school, was now working at the local hospital. To the surprise of many, a prominent white woman that had taken a liking to her paid for her tuition. This relationship would last for many years to come. The band was in full affect and the seemingly happy couple was not too happy. The researcher, his brother and now younger sister had become common faces at the local schools and youth sports league.

This was his life until he was nine years old and that is when the great escape or least that is what the researcher calls it happened. While sound asleep one late night, his mother abruptly awakens him, his brother and sister up out of their sleep, whisking them away in the middle of the night. The plan was executed with flawless precision, and with the help of another family member, went off without a hitch. The next morning when they awoke, they were in a motel room in a differently city and seemingly in a different part of the world.

His mother was not kidnapping nor abducting them but finally running away from an abusive husband. After years of abuse and infidelity, she had finally had enough. This was not the first time she had left or attempted to leave but this was the first time she had taken it this far. As that night plays over and over in the researcher's mind, painful images continue to grip his soul. As to the question of why she stayed so long, endured so

much or did not kill him as she often admitted she wanted to do? She simply responds, “He was my children’s father” and nothing else needed to be said.

To many he was a nice family man who changed as his band gained a little popularity. To others, he was the playboy from Screven, Georgia but to him, he was his father. This was the man who represented a conundrum for the researcher. This was because on the hand, this man was the father that he revered and highly loved, but on the other hand, this was the man he now viewed as a monster and the source of deep and utter contempt. This was the man for whom the researcher vowed never to be like or imitate.

Now living, and in certain respects hiding, in a new city that would be called home for the next five years she starts the arduous rebuilding process. After the eventful happenings of that situation and the reshaping of his family dynamics, life appeared to take on a different persona and different feel. The rural upbringing that often brought isolation and seclusion had been replaced by the up-tempo living of a bustling college town about one hundred miles away. To him, this was a new world, not just a new city.

The researcher attributes much of his maturation and growth to this time period. It was here that he first met independence, responsibility, difference and accountability. These were individuals, entities and realities that he had never thought about that much but now would serve as the anvil for character shaping. The entrance into this whole new ‘world’ would subsequently change the researcher’s outlook on life forever.

Now without a father and an adult male in the home and being raised by a single mother, things became extremely difficult, emotionally, psychologically and financially. As the sole provider, his mother was forced to go from working one job to working two-

and-a-half jobs. No one could have predicted the hardship that would befall his family, but no one could have predicted the strength that would develop in him either. Watching his mother struggle daily and having to deal with the growing pains of adolescence caused some deep seeded issues that would surface later in his life.

Growing up in Statesboro, Georgia brought more fond memories than the researcher can count. He still carries a true affinity for this city until this very day. These were some of the best of times but were also some of the worst. Mixing, mingling and being cared for by college students while his mother worked and slept was truly a phenomenon that baffles him to the present. Establishing relationships and learning how the networking process of life unfolds was a significant aspect of this phase. However, watching his dear mother wake up not knowing what day it was because she had been working 16 hour shifts, five, six sometimes seven days a week without a break became another indelible picture seared into his memory.

Even when she did have a day off, it was spent with her children cleaning the yard of an elderly couple that became fond of her as she worked at a local nursing home, for extra money. His mother's quest to take care of her children was one no matter the cost she willingly paid. Is it any wonder that his mother became and has remained his hero up unto this day? She was the pillar of strength and his rock that he could depend on.

During this period, sports became the outlet for this very impressionable boy and his other siblings. Though football and baseball was something that he had been involved in previously, it now would become his lifeline; it would become his salvation. All was not cheerful and pleasant in this new city. There were quite a few challenges for these new kids on the block that had to be dealt with during this time of transition.

It was at this time that the researcher found himself operating in two worlds. One world offered acceptance and friendship; the other rejection and isolation. One world offered healthy relationships among the white elite; the other unhealthy relationships among the black lower-middle class. One world offered unlimited resources, aid and support; and the other insufficient resources and attention. Confusion soon set in as the researcher often found himself torn between desire and reality.

The two worlds were split by geographical dynamics. The two worlds were split by race; ultimately they were split by recreation centers. Because of his mother's disposition, she only allowed her children to play sports at the main or predominately white recreation center and not the recreation center that was located on the side of town that was close to where they lived, the predominately black one. The researcher readily admits that he did not recognize how significant her decision was then and the future impact and consequences it would have on his life.

College students that did not look like him served as mentors, volunteer babysitters and care takers for the children. They provided the boys with opportunities for earning money by offering odd jobs throughout the complex. The college students' assistance was not just limited to the older boys but they also looked after the researcher's younger sister at the delight of his mother. College students; predominantly white college students played a very instrumental role in the development of these children. This was a dramatic shift from what they previously knew and what society deemed acceptable.

However, on the other hand they were being alienated; at least the researcher was from many of his peers that were black. Outside of school, interaction was limited to only

the blacks living in his community. The researcher suffered constant mocking and teasing from this crowd, which was quite different from what he, had experience in the rural south. This caused a deep-seated resentment and level of anger that would eventually erupt a few years later.

This presented a major paradox in the life of the researcher because he was being exposed to two ways of living and started only wanting to be associated with the predominantly non-black one. At times, he even found himself wishing he was Caucasian because they seemed to have everything and they treated him so well. This was how his ideal was being shaped and formed during this period. However, life was getting ready to take another twist and turn?

After five years, his family moved again to Miami, Florida and this was another major move because this was a total shift from the college town in South Georgia to a sprawling metropolis. A significant occurrence, this move would launch the researcher into a life that he could have never imagined or dreamed. It was into such chaos that this timid, frail, scared southern boy eased his way in and began navigating his path in the big city.

No one knew at the time that the apartment complex they moved into was known for being one of the toughest in the city. To them it was their new home. Before this move, his older brother was looked up to and provided the male leadership that the family needed. Yet, little did anyone know that that role was about to undergo a major change. For him, as well as his siblings, sports always seemed to be the anecdote that cured all the homesickness, fear, anxiety and leveled the playing field for these outsiders looking for a way to be integrated into this new cultural fabric.

He soon met three neighborhood guys that would become his friends. None of them were considered bad kids but were easy going boys with a penchant for fun. As the years went by they would all go in different directions after high school. However, their friendships never lost its luster or strength and remain intact this very day.

These new friends helped him steer clear of potential community hazards that all too often swallowed up the unsuspecting. They accomplished this while simultaneously guiding him towards those things that brought positive childhood experiences. The researcher had a lot to learn having been sheltered from the dynamics of inner-city life previously. Therefore, their discipleship of this novice during this integration process proved to be invaluable.

He began seeing himself as a part of his community, not outside of it, and fighting against the same things as everyone else. The images of utopia that once filled his youthful eyes were quickly fading away. The reality of what it truly means to be a young black man in America was taking shape. With that growth and development, came a new found love and respect for 'his' community. The struggles that existed within the black community, somehow oblivious to him previously, became glaring points of pride and respect.

However, this recalibration of loyalties did nothing to diminish his perspective on his experiences within the white community, it only broadened them. His worldview was actually going through a transformation, which would pay major dividends later in life. It was at this time that learning how to respect the other and seeds to ecumenical ministry would be sown that are still bearing fruit. Much of what the researcher experienced serves as the impetus and fuel for his present day passion for service.

The researcher began to establish himself within his new community as a talented athlete. This went a long way in establishing street credibility, which was very important in the inner city. There were some defining moments that cemented his status on and off the playing field. After some impressive games, word began to spread about the kid from Georgia that could play. But there was no event that cemented his status within this community as much as “the” fight; at least that is what it became known as.

Proving or defending yourself was something that seemed unavoidable, at some point or another within the environment, and his time had come only a few months after the move. It was a regular day with all the community kids just hanging out. One of the known community bullies ventured over to take in the sights. After some friendly bantering between the bully and some other kids, the focus somehow shifted to the researcher.

What he thought was a lighthearted response to why he was laughing like the others was taken as an affront and act of defiance. Attempting to diffuse the situation out of fear through offering up a sincere apology did not work. Somehow a regular day became irregular and he found himself between a rock and a hard place with no way out. Suddenly and without warning he found himself squaring off with the community menace.

A physical battle ensued and what followed filled the onlookers with amazement. As the phrase goes, “once you let the Ginny out of the bottle, you cannot put her back”, and the Ginny was out of the bottle. When the showdown concluded, the researcher’s legend was born and things were never the same again. On the surface, it seemed as though the researcher just had a lucky day and that he caught the other guy not at his best.

The truth is that there was something else lurking internally below the surface. The verbal abuse, the teasing and mocking that the researcher had previously experienced coupled with the unexpressed pain caused by his father's abuse of his mother had finally taken its toll. Below the veneer of this polite and manner able boy with the million-dollar smile lie a rage that had been simmering for years. It had finally come to a head and like a volcanic eruption all the pent up rage came out. That day the community bully bore the brunt off this explosion.

This event created a seismic shift socially on a much broader scale. His older brother unconsciously surrendered the role of the man of the house. His sister began looking to him for protection and support. The most telling evidence came as his mother began leaving him with instructions for the house while she was at work. This position switch would later lead to an event that would forever haunt the researcher.

It took the events of that day relatively no time to make the rounds and pretty soon it was the talk of the neighborhood and the middle school they all attended. This shy, scared, soft-spoken Georgia boy had suddenly been transformed and a new person had been born, or rather unleashed. Still humble, and never comfortable with the spotlight, a leader was being shaped from the incubator of this inner city community.

Soon he found himself at the pinnacle of high school sports. However, all was not well, as there was something brewing deep down in his core that would eventually rock the foundation of his life. Never hesitant to have a good but innocent time, unlike before, the good times now included lots of partying, woman, alcohol, drugs. Innocence was lost and nowhere to be found. His life was in full motion and remnants of the old life had quickly faded away. Now, the person that his siblings, family and friends looked up

to, this once rejected and ostracized introvert had become the life of the party and the toast of the town.

Life continued to unfold and by this point, the researcher has been astutely and meticulously discipled into the big city culture and was excelling in his craft. The person who at one time was the butt of all jokes was now the one doing the joking and laughing. It seemed as though everything that he could not have previously was now at his fingertips and he did not do a good job at handling this newfound influence.

Divine Encounters: Changed in a Moment

He soon entered into a life in the “fast” lane”, which included just about everything you could imagine. His life was absolutely deteriorating and spiraling out control, a life now far from his humble roots and upbringing, a life so full of promise and goodness. After getting chance after chance, he finally found himself alone in his apartment on his knees crying out for God’s help and intervention, and intervene he did. This was the first life changing event and where the healing process began. Crushed by the results of another sequence of bad decisions, he sought out a co-worker of his at the time, which always talked to him about God and the church.

The very thing which he vowed never to do, is what he had become guilty of doing. The very person that he vowed never to be like; his father, he had become. This was the thing that finally got his attention; this was Jacob meeting himself in his uncle Laban. It was déjà vu, almost fifteen years in the making, only instead of his mother packing up her children and running away while their father was not home; it was the mother of his daughter packing her up and leaving while he was away. The moment was

surreal and caused his heart to skip a beat. His luck had run out and it was finally time for him to take responsibility for his actions. Simply put, it was time for a change.

Perspective had been an evading variance that he seemed to be allergic to catching; however, there was no evading it now. Left to himself, he was finally ready to look himself in the mirror and give an honest opinion of what he saw. That picture brought great disappointment and even shame. He was so far removed from what life had been and he understood that it was going to take a yeoman's effort to get back on track.

This is where God comes in-what a cliché! The researcher never really knew too much about God during his adolescent life, other than the fact that some of his family members (a couple of aunts) had changed because of Him. However, there was a belief that there was a God out there somewhere. This belief was personalized when he had an encounter with the risen Lord while alone in his apartment. As a result this conversion experience, a spiritual heart transplant was performed and life would never be the same. After which, he spoke with a co-worker about it, and subsequently attended a worship service on August 26, 1990.

On that day he became a member of that Baptist faith community and his faith journey had begun. Not long after (about six months), he found himself sharing with people about interactions he thought he was having with God. As a result of these interactions, he felt God was calling him to preach. Some insisted that he did not know what he was talking about while others began to encourage and pray with him.

It was within this community that things began to get back on track. Though the relationship with his daughter's mother never healed, things did begin to change for the better for him. He was now looking at life much differently and the road to new life

appeared brighter. Family is what this new community provided and many significant relationships were started as a result of it. Some of those relationships are still bearing fruit to this day.

Much progress was made during this time and the researcher's life was being turned around, like a super tanker, slowly but most assuredly. A new journey was being embarked upon and things were looking up, finally. He began to experience life again and this life was reminiscent of the wholesome life that had previously been an incubator for all that was good and pure. There were a number of bumps in the road and significant hurdles that would have to be overcome but he seemed to be willing to meet them head on.

After a sequence of events that only God can explain, he moved to Tallahassee, Florida where he met a pastor by the name of Dr. David Henderson, who would eventually become his pastor and mentor in the ministry. Some kind of way, they both became what the other person needed; the researcher needed a father and this pastor always a son. Shortly thereafter, he was being licensed into the gospel ministry. He began serving as the Youth Minister for a period of time before being approached by Dr. Henderson about pursuing theological education.

This endeavor led him back to his roots in Georgia. There he began seeing more of God unfolding before his very eyes. The researcher began yet another new chapter in this spiritual journey. Shortly thereafter, he began attending Luther Rice Bible College, where he graduated with a Bachelor's of Arts Degree in Biblical Studies. It was also during this time that he met a young lady that he would eventually marry a few years later. Now married and heading into his senior year of Bible College, he was called and

began the pastoring a church in Panama City, Florida. Off he and his new bride went to do the Lord's work but this experience would prove to be a very costly one.

The young couple would find themselves in the midst of a hornet's nest. Infighting, as one would picture the Hatfield's and the McCoy's had been going for years within this faith community, and there was no training that prepared the researcher and wife for this. Unbeknownst to them, this would be the seed that would cause irreparable damage to the young couples' marriage, down the road. After nearly a year and a half in Panama City, the couple was back in Georgia, in what would be yet another transition in his life.

Now having settled into their new surroundings, the researcher began his new role as a church planter with the Southeast Association of the Southern Baptist Convention. This experience presented a huge challenge but unlimited benefits in the world of rising up community. As time went on, the restraints of working within a denominational structure became more and more frustrating. It was within this context that he began ministering across denominational and state lines, while being constantly confronted about his "Baptist" allegiances.

Divine Encounters: A Paradigm Change

However, these ecumenical relationships were simply paving the way for the ministry that was to come. After navigating through the landmines of this endeavor, a few more significant ones lay ahead. The second life-changing event occurred during another time alone with God. While praying, the researcher heard what he believed was the voice of the Lord instructing him to lay hands on his own head, which he did. As he carried out these instructions, immediately he was baptized in the Holy Spirit, with the evidence of

speaking in tongues. This encounter and soaking time lasted for about three hours and was a major shock to his previous paradigm.

Suffice it to say, this experience caused major tensions between him and his current ministry context. Others followed that would subsequently lead to the researcher resigning from his position as a church planter with the Baptist Association he was connected to and relocating back to Atlanta, Georgia.

Without any sense of direction, things would deteriorate and a divorce would follow. Over the next few years, he goes through what he calls a period of detoxification, as residue from the previous wineskin was being removed and room was being made for the making a new wineskin. New wine was being poured out as several persons were brought into his life that aided this transition from one context to another.

As a result of these relationships, the researcher began travelling as doors began to open up, in many different places. However, his previous experiences of cross-denominational ministry as a church planter, had prepared him for what was occurring at that time. He began to assist others and lead teams in the planting of new non-denominational Spirit-filled churches in several different states.

During this period of time, something was still festering beneath the surface of his life. He began having interactions that could not be understood nor explained. Change was occurring and internal tensions were becoming overbearing. As fate would have it, a trip back to Panama City, Florida was in store, setting off cataclysmic events that became the launching pad for supernatural ministry.

Fellowship Church of Praise

In Panama City, Florida, where it all began in ministry for the researcher, he would have a sequence of encounters that would further cement this new paradigm change that was currently underway. During his initial pastorate years earlier, he befriended the pastors of this local apostolic and prophetic community. After a conversation detailing the recent turn of events, an invitation was extended to the researcher to come and spend some time with the pastors. Shortly thereafter, he was off for a ride of a lifetime.

Upon arriving in Panama City, Florida and connecting with the pastors, he discovered that a church sponsored prophetic conference was being held. This was his first real conference experience within a prophetic setting and environment. However, it most certainly would not be the last. As a novice to these types of meetings, not much beyond the norm was expected, but something powerful had already been moving deep within him. He would soon find out exactly what (or better yet who) that was.

After the evening speaker had shared the word, he began ministering in the gifts, as it what called, and to his surprise the researcher was the first person called out. A prophetic word was spoken over his life and hands were laid upon his head. This act would lead to him receiving a major impartation and stirring of the gifts of the Spirit. Electricity seemed to flow through his body as he was slain in the Spirit. This experience would be the first of many that would further change the researcher's life and ministry.

High Praise Worship Center

A few weeks later, some friends and former ministry partners invited the researcher to another prophetic conference. This time would be different as he purposed to avoid another fiasco like before. Armed with a strategy to not be embarrassed again, he sat in the back of the auditorium, in an attempt to not be singled out again. Not surprisingly, his strategy did not work.

After the speaker finished ministering the word, they began moving around the auditorium ministering prophetically to individuals. As fate would have it, the researcher was approached and again ministered to prophetically. No hands were laid upon him but the download was just as potent and significant. As he sat there dumbfounded by the words flowing from the speaker, everything grew still and quiet around him. This encounter pushed the correct buttons and sent shockwaves through his being. That night more scales fell from his eyes and granting more access to a realm that seemed so far away and totally inaccessible.

Shortly after this, the researcher began having Friday night gatherings, which saw him began moving in the gifts as prophesied. This was a shocking turn of events for him as well as those previously acquainted with his style of ministry. A valve switch had been turned on and a new portal into the supernatural was evident. This was the first time that he was conducting what could be termed, Pentecostal meetings where he was moving in the gifts of the Spirit.

Christian International

As time moved on, a couple of months removed from the last encounter, another defining moment lay just around the corner. One Sunday morning, awakened out of his

deep sleep, he was instructed to attend a morning worship service at Christian International in Santa Rosa Beach, Florida. This was not a particularly optimum location for someone looking to avoid receiving any more prophetic words as Bishop Bill Hamon, the well-known researcher and prophet was the senior minister at this place.

However, the researcher quickly surmised that if indeed this was the leading of the Lord, this was a good day to visit. It is a known fact that Friday nights are the designated times for the prophetic teams to give individual prophecies as people descend upon Christian International as it is known from all over the world. Sundays were usually limited to national and international declarations so he would be safe to attend. At least that is what he concluded.

After arriving late, and finding a seat close to the rear of the auditorium, worship took a distinct shift and what happened next did not follow the norm. The worship leader approached the edge of the stage and began pointing in his direction. Stunned as the other thousands of worshippers, he began looking around as well. Reality would soon sink in and recognition of the moment would become a tough pill to swallow hit. Though the context was very different, the researcher found himself feeling like King David when he was singled out and told by the prophet Nathan that “he was the one” (2 Samuel 12:7).

He made his way reluctantly and shyly to the stage where he was asked to come onto. Being whisked away in a whirlwind of spiritual bliss, he experienced something that he had not before. The worship leader began ministering the prophetic word through song, which sent the crowd of worshippers into a spiritual frenzy, and the researcher into a trance that lasted the duration of the service. This was yet another experience that would have a profound consequences on the direction of his life and ministry assignment.

After the service, many individuals and families from the multitudes of worshippers came to further encourage and bless him. One family in particular invited him to lunch, which was gladly accepted. During the lunch, information was given to him about an apostolic leader and network that would that he would ultimately connect with. All of these encounters were distinctly different in scope but distinctly similar in impact. His life neither would nor could ever be the same. Together they would become the thread in the cord that would forever bind him to this new place in God.

World Breakthrough Network

The researcher spent the initial years of his walk as a denominational adherent and follower. Being rooted and grounded in the scriptures as most mainstream evangelicals were, he subscribed to a cessationist position and worldview, in regards to the signs, wonders, healing and miracles. However, to his chagrin, his denominational connections became an insufficient source for life giving relationships and kingdom activity.

It is well documented that over the last several decades, denominations and it's affiliates have seen a major hemorrhage of adherents. Many of which who have departed have since become affiliated with less organized and regimented groups known as apostolic networks. These networks offer freedom and autonomy from hierachal intrusion but accountability systems and structures born out of relationships.

Through a sequence of events, the researcher became familiar with and later connected to the World Breakthrough Network, one of those apostolic networks previously mentioned, under the leadership in Apostle Noel Woodroffe. This too became

a significant occurrence in the spiritual development of the researcher as it later undergirded the next phase of ministry activity and movement.

During this period, his passion and understanding grew in the area of five-fold ministry and the operation of the gifts of the Spirit. This would be the environment where his appetite for the supernatural was being increased and expanded. Building missional and/or apostolic people was a major emphasis. This had been the desire of his heart for quite a number of years. One of the pillars of this network was the doctrine of the Priesthood of the believer.

Equipping the saints was the mantra that the network operated under. It is the belief that every member and/or follower of Jesus is a minister and has an assignment to advance the kingdom of God. Most renewal movements have historically always incorporated some nuance of this doctrine within their orthodoxy. Empowering others to take the gospel message of the kingdom of God to indigenous settings and environments has been the key championed by the leaders of the movement.

Divine Encounters: Relocating and Reconfiguring

The Turning Point Christian

As time passed, the researcher became more entrenched within the World Breakthrough Network, with several key relationships emerging from it. While having a time of prayer with one of the representatives and coordinators of the network, he began to hear the voice of the Lord speaking about another upcoming transition, which he shared with the prayer partner. They both agreed to continue praying and seeking the mind of God on this issue.

A few weeks later as they were engaging in their weekly time of prayer, both men agreed that they felt a witness of the Holy Spirit to this directive. A few months later, the researcher relocated to Cincinnati, Ohio. In April 2006 he began having bible studies in his office and apartment in September 2006. This bible study would serve as the seedbed for what would become the Turning Point Christian Center, which was founded in September 2007.

In April 2010, the researcher was given the task of stewarding the merging of what was the Turning Point Christian Center and the Zion Benevolent Baptist Church into one church, the new Turning Point Church of Zion, where he served as overseer and senior pastor until April 2011. Once this endeavor was completed, a short time later, he began to sense that his assignment had to this local community of believers had come to an end. Leading a group of believers into a new place and helping to fulfill the dreams of those involved provided him with a measure of satisfaction.

However, there was a new mandate he began to feel, which was not attached to this community. It was time to “Enlarge the place of your tent; Stretch out the curtains of your dwellings, spare not; Lengthen your cords And strengthen your pegs” (Isaiah 54:2). Many years ago, the researcher received a vision of an equipping center that would train disciples in practical ministry. Motivated by the doctrine of the Priesthood of the believer, this would be a place where people would become familiar with and released into their call as ministers of God in the marketplace. Knowing this required a different context, he resigned as the senior pastor of the Turning Point Church of Zion, in order to pursue this God-ordained assignment.

The Embassy International

After some significant time in prayer, this sabbatical would lead to the starting of the Embassy International shortly thereafter. The vision of this apostolic training and equipping center came to fruition in February 2012. The Embassy of the Saints International or simply the Embassy International is currently headquartered in Cincinnati, Ohio. This is a missional-apostolic equipping and resource center seeking to empower individuals and churches to walk out the highest order of God's calling as ambassadors of Christ.

Embassy means a body of persons entrusted with a mission to a sovereign or government, headed especially by an ambassador. The whole idea behind this ministry is to multiply leaders to join the Father in expanding the kingdom of God in the earth; simply put to help followers of Jesus live out a life on mission. The Embassy International is a saint's movement according to Ephesians 4 and Romans 8.

The overall ministry mandate is to train, equip and resource leaders to expand the kingdom of God through impartation, healing, deliverance, and prophetic ministry. Our ultimate goal is to serve as an Apostolic ministry 'hub' according to the Antioch church model in Acts 13...that will impact the local and global church through equipping and training leaders to serve out their roles as market place ministers, church planters, evangelists or missionary Ambassadors in the earth.

United Theological Seminary

Going back to pursue theological education was a major decision for the researcher. As things continued to evolve within his ministry context, the leading to pursue more training grew stronger and stronger. As this leading grew, he began doing

reconnaissance on local theological institutions and had gathered a bevy of options. As fate would have it, a close associate had recently graduated from United Theological Seminary and recommended it. After researching it, he decided to enroll.

The researcher attributes much of what has occurred in his life relationally, theologically, and spiritually to that decision. It is as a result of matriculating through this institution, he believes that his personal development has taken shape at an unprecedented rate and level. This was yet another environment that he has encountered the Holy Spirit in a profound way, with each encounter, proving to be more enriching and forward thrusting than the next.

United Theological Seminary is vastly becoming a bastion for the move of the Holy Spirit within academia and is serving as a hub and nexus for kingdom activity. Much of what has occurred and is occurring there in this area is a recent phenomenon. The researcher witnessed and even participated in its development and growth since the inception. As a result of becoming a member of this community, positive change and major development has been the outcome. These have all impacted and influenced his life for years to come.

Being in a unique setting where academia and the Holy Spirit have converged together creating an intersection of kingdom movement has infused the theological education experience of the researcher. The seminary has long been the envy of its peers and denominational affiliates and he has been a part of this newfound evolution into the move of the Spirit. As an active participant in various worship events and prayer gatherings conducted for the seminary, the researcher has been transformed as it has transformed.

Randy Clark and Global Awakening

Another occurrence that changed the trajectory of the researcher's life was the decision to become affiliated with the apostolic network of Global Awakening, and the entire Global Awakening family under the leadership of Dr. Randy Clark. This has been a tremendous experience that has produced significant fruit in his life and ministry. Within this environment, his natural spiritual proclivities and beliefs have been allowed to flow freely. A number of years had passed since he received a prophetic word regarding a God-ordained connection to a group of like-minded believers in the healing and deliverance arena. Once this joining occurred, those words were fulfilled.

Instantly his life and ministry seemed to take on a new and distinct flow, seamlessly moving into the healing and revelatory dimension of the kingdom of God. There was also an increased desire to equip and impart into others according to Ephesians 4, which coincided with his deep missional convictions based on the doctrine of the Priesthood of the Believer (1 Peter 2:9). However, the most significant nuance of this relational connection was the emphasis on the charismata, especially upon the revelatory gifts. Learning more about the gifts of the Spirit and how to flow competently in them had long been the quest of the researcher. The results of that heartfelt quest have already yielded tremendous fruit.

Ministry Context

Madisonville, Ohio is located outside the city of Cincinnati, Ohio, with a community of 9,902 residents. Nearly 22.5% fall beneath the poverty line, with the household median income is \$59,446 compared with \$31,301 for the city of Cincinnati.

¹ The church is located in the downtown area and surrounded by retail stores, business offices, and low-income housing. Because of the availability of relatively inexpensive housing and social services, the poor, and the downtrodden congregate in Madisonville. This presents an economic challenge for local retail stores, but it provides the perfect environment for a church committed to continuing the ministry of Jesus, “... healing the sick, raising the dead, cleansing lepers, and casting out demons” (Mt. 10:8) in the marketplace.

Many in the community of Madisonville deal with the issues of poverty, addiction, mental illness, and a variety of economic obstacles, which often arise from dysfunctional family behaviors as addiction and physical and sexual abuse. This destructive cycle tends to be generational, aiding in the difficulties faced. Many of Madisonville’s residents do not have or believe that a local faith community seeks their healing and restoration through creating loving, accepting relationships that demonstrate the true nature of God. Therefore, strained relationships are rampant within and without this city.

NLTC was established in February 1972 by Pastor Ralph Godfrey, Sr. It has been a place where people have come to worship a true and living God. Since its inception this church has formed several substantial scripture based training programs as well as a bible college and leadership institute founded with an objective to equip saints for the work of the Kingdom. Never forgetting its purpose, NLTC is diligent to do its part in promoting and establishing the Kingdom of God in the earth.

¹City-Data.com, “Madisonville, Ohio,”accessed June 20, 2014. <http://www.city-data.com/neighborhood/Madisonville-Cincinnati-OH.html>.

As of September 2011, Ralph Godfrey, Jr. is now the Senior Pastor of NLTC and it is his goal to continue moving forward in the work already established. This following information best describes the heart and passion for ministry, per the NLTC website.

“NLTC is an experience that you will never forget! Our desire is to have a true encounter with GOD every time we come together. We believe that we are called to shine forth in these dark times (thus the images of lighthouses). Our lives should be a beacon of hope to all who are lost in this wayward journey. Our goal is to lead men to the way of truth in Christ by expressing the love of God to all, preaching a sound gospel message, making disciples and living a successful Kingdom lifestyle.

NLTC considers itself a New Testament Church. This is a Church that believes and operates under the biblical guidelines outlined according to the Bible. We also believe that we are a Church that has been blessed with apostolic graces. NLTC has been graced to have a five-fold ministry team. We believe that this team from time to time will be sent out to do effective ministry for other churches within the Body of Christ. In the New Testament there are two words that mean sent out, which was a major emphasis of Jesus. The first word in Greek is *pempo* which is the word used for sending. However when we speak of the term *apostello*, it is used to denote sending of persons with a commission and in some cases to denote a divine sending and researcherization. Usually the term commission involves the researchery given to perform a task.”² Activating each member to be a minister has been the desire of NLTC from its inception.

God raised up NLTC as a church committed to worship, prayer, and the power of the full-gospel to set people free from the bondages that have hindered them from

² www.newlifetemplechurch.org/

knowing the fullness of joy in God. While many NLTC members have learned much about healing ministry, the time has come to institute a class in healing ministry for those at NLTC who have no experience but are eager to learn. The desire to bring healing and restoration to brokenness has increased at NLTC as the church has grown in spiritual maturity and development.

Miracles, signs, and wonders demonstrate the reality of the kingdom of God. Supernatural power is the essence of the gospel of the kingdom of God. It is this element that the leadership sought to incorporate within the fabric of this community. A missional lifestyle, with an emphasis of marketplace ministry was the new shift that the Holy Spirit was addressing within this body of believers. They were ready and prepared for this new chapter of ministry God had called them to.

Conclusion

History shows that individuals are prepared for certain moments, rather they realize exactly just what they were being prepared for or not. Within those moments, everything seems to align, leaving nothing to chance. The resulting affects tend to lead to turning points in the lives of men. This coincides with that which has occurred throughout time and is now being witnessed at NLTC. Two church leaders were divinely brought together relationally, both with different gifts and graces. However, their love for God, conviction for a supernatural lifestyle, desire to see community transformation, and a strong desire to see the church of Jesus Christ operating in the gift of healing. The researcher is convinced that it is going to take a New Testament approach to missional ministry that includes miracles, signs, and wonders to bring a comprehensive salvation,

which includes healing and deliverance to those who have been caught in the ploy of the enemy.

The next chapter provides the biblical, historical, and theological framework for the ministry of healing in the context of marketplace ministry. Because of the opposition by those who still hold to a cessationist view of the gifts of the Spirit, it is necessary to establish the theoretical foundations for the project.

CHAPTER TWO

THEORETICAL FOUNDATION

Introduction

Jesus commissioned his followers to continue the ministry that he had commenced, which included “making disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you” (Matthew 28:19-20). They were to exemplify this newfound identity they now possessed in him. This assignment was to be a perpetual one, having the kingdom of God as the underlining message and emphasis. One of the undervalued nuances of this assignment is the responsibility to go. The Father sent Jesus to the earth, the Holy Spirit was sent by the Father through Jesus and Jesus subsequently sent his disciples out in like manner under the power of the Holy Spirit. This is the model of ministry that was established for the church and is currently being reestablished.

This chapter begins by examining biblical support for the validity of supernatural ministry within the missional church today. In addition, a brief historical survey of the missional church, its meaning, and function, with some examples practiced throughout the generations. In addition, it examined the theological position and pulse of the missional church, in conjunction to supernatural ministry. This provided validation of the fact that segments of the church throughout its existence have embraced spiritual gifts and miracles, signs, and wonders.

The project consists of testing an eight-week discipleship and healing program designed to train members of NLTC in the areas of the charismata; specifically words of knowledge, praying for the sick, and market place ministry.

Biblical Foundations Paper

The Church is in desperate need of reviving, renewing and reforming; many church theologians, researchers and practitioners agree to this fact. Many have wondered aloud and quietly, as to what the remedy is and exactly how the Church came to be in this current unfavorable condition. Many propositions have been suggested to stem the tide and many others have been bandied about to serve as quick fixes but there's one that has received much traction and continues to pick up steam. That proposal focuses on Missiology and the emerging missional church. Many independent churches, have starting to emerge, carrying with them a missional spirit that seemed to be exactly what the world has been waiting for.

Missiology is the study of missions. The terms *missional* and *missional church* originated in the work of a group of North American practitioners, missiologists, and theorist called the Gospel and Our Culture Network better known as GOCN.¹ As a discipline, it seeks to identify the primal impulses in the scriptures that compel God's people into the world. A Missional Church is a church that defines itself, and organizes its life around, its real purpose as an agent of God's mission to the world. For some, the

¹ For a detailed account See Alan Hirsch, *The Forgotten Ways: Reactivating the Missional Church* (Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2006), 81-82; See, Darrell L. Guder, *Missional Church: A Vision for the Sending of the Church in North America* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing, 1998), 6; Craig Van Gelder and Dwight J. Zscheile, *The Missional Church in Perspective: Mapping Trends and Shaping the Conversation* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2011), xix, 1-3.

reason why the Church or certain sectors of it is declining is because in most instances, she has lost her missional identity.

History has shown that many church leaders in times of crisis often default or revert back to the old models of doing church, even when those models have proven not to be long-term remedies for church expansion and growth. One need only trace the movements of the church through Christendom or the era of Constantine, which still has tremendous effects now. It was during this time that the church lost her missional way or edge and became centralized.² No longer was there a need to take the gospel everywhere because everyone would already be born into Christianity. Also, there was no longer a need, nor a place for the Church to operate in the gifts of the Spirit.

This chapter will show how traditional missional church theology minimizes the very doctrines and operations that the New Testament church emphasized and was founded upon: the “power of God unto salvation.” First, the paper will examine the validity of the biblical narrative being viewed from a missional hermeneutic. Second, it will examine the call to serving under a new hermeneutic within the missional church. Third, the significance and role of the charismata will be explored in the scope of Early Church practice and today. Fourth and finally, two biblical examples will be examined as a model for current missional practices.

²Hirsch, *The Forgotten Ways*, 22, 46.

A Missional Hermeneutic: Changing Lenses

Mission to the nations would have been legitimate even if Jesus had not given the Great Commission because it is a part of the whole story of the Bible. The biblical narrative could be utilized to make the following summations; God as a missional God, God's people as a missional people and scripture as a missional document. As a result of having this perspective, one could very easily conclude God's purpose, the church's purposes, and the function of scripture as missional.

From a biblical perspective and standpoint, missional or the missio Dei is a Latin term that has the idea of being sent; to go. It implies the idea of emissions or a movement outward. From the beginning God has always been moving outward toward His creation. Since the very beginning, God demonstrated his nature and identity as the God of mission or the missional God (Genesis 1:1-3). Mission refers to God's redemptive, historical initiative on behalf of His creation. Mission is first foremost about God and His redemptive purposes and initiatives in the world, quite apart from any actions or tasks or strategies or initiatives the church may undertake.

We see the account of God coming to Noah while on mission to destroy the corruption but save a remnant (Gen 6:6-11), Abraham in order to establish an everlasting covenant with him (Genesis 12:1-12), and Moses before sending him to deliver His people from bondage and oppression at the hands of pharaoh (Exodus 3:1-9), to highlight just a few examples.

The missio Dei has always been moving outward toward His creation, with a specific goal of being in relationship with them. Jesus issued a mandate to His followers

to go into the entire world and be his ambassadors (Matthew 28:18-20). He also described his own participation in the Father's mission (Luke 19:10).

Christopher J. H. Wright, the well known researcher of The Missions of God: *Unlocking the Bible's Grand Narrative*, set out in establishing a Biblical Missional Hermeneutics.³ This shift in focus would be one in which readers could and would see the entire Bible as a chronicled exposé of God's missional plan or God's mission from the beginning. In so doing, one would not have to search for 'proof-texts' to validate, motivate or simply justify their desire to engage in missions.

Wright claims a missional basis for the Bible and not a biblical basis for mission. He sees mission as an *a priori* to approaching the text since the Bible came out of a missional context, and its content is missional and its revelational form of communication is missional. He is looking for a map to read the Bible. The fact is that there are quite a few different lenses; or better yet, "contextual theologies or advocacy reading"⁴ that one can view the biblical narrative from. Some of them include, Western Theology, Dalit Theology from India, Minjung Theology in Korea, Black Theology and Feminist Theology, just to name a few.⁵ Most, if not all of them have a deep sense of call for "liberation" within their construct and base their mission(s) off of it.

Currently, one of the issues or problems in the area of mission and missions stems from the persistent, almost subconscious, paradigm that mission is fundamentally and primarily something we do—a human task of the church. However, it is believed that if

³ See Christopher J.H. Wright, *The Mission of God: Unlocking the Bible's Grand Narrative* (Downers Grove, IL: Inter Varsity Press, 2006), 22.

⁴ Wright, *The Mission of God*, 41-42.

⁵ Ibid, 43.

humanity can shift from (1) our human agency to the ultimate purposes of God himself, (2) mission as “missions” that we undertake, to mission as that which God has been purposing and accomplishing from eternity to eternity and (3) an anthropocentric (or ecclesiocentric) conception to a radically theocentric worldview, then one would clearly be able to see a “missional basis of the Bible.”⁶ This will lead ultimately to the conclusion that “mission is not ours; mission is God’s.

This was and is important in the grand scheme of things because there’s been so much debate about that which God does (*missio Dei* or, the mission of God) and that which humanity; and more specifically the church does (missions). He goes to great lengths to establish that not only is there a line of demarcation but that that line is very clear and distinct. All of humanity has been called (in one way or another) to participate in mission(s) but no matter what those missional activities look like; they can and will only be considered true if they connect back to God’s original mission.

Throughout the course of time, this distinction had been a major issue and the cause of great debate. And while the air is getting just a little bit clearer, much debate still lies ahead. However, with that being said, no one can deny that God has been on mission for all of creation and has been moving to fulfill that mission ever since He stepped on scene. Who in their ‘right’ mind would dare to question that?

The biblical narrative chronicles how God has moved throughout history in and around people (Abraham and others), His people (Israel), His Son and now His Church to accomplish His initial and ultimate mission; to bless all humanity. God’s ultimate mission is driven by the goal of “making Himself known as the only true and living

⁶ See Timothy Tennent, *Invitation to Missions* (Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2006), 9.

God.” This quest can be seen manifesting itself time after time, book after book, section after section (i.e., the law or Torah, prophets, writings, gospels, the epistles, and Revelation).

Also, one is amazed at the seemingly seamless transitions that God makes from one era to another, determined to accomplish His goal. To be sure, God’s mission was always at the focal point of His actions, even if that didn’t seem to be the case with humanity. Even when things seemed to go awry even as early as in the Garden of Eden, God has always been in control. This can be followed and was highlighted throughout the biblical narrative.

It is clear that starting with the New Testament, in order to establish what God’s mission was and when God’s mission started, would be a great mistake. The Old Testament illustrates almost flawlessly, how God’s mission originated and travelled throughout time. This reality can be seen as a major emphasis by viewing how researchers of the New Testament often connected events and sayings to that of the Old Testament, in regards to the mission of God and of the Abrahamic covenant.

One need go no further than the gospels to witness this point being validated. Jesus, His birth and presence, ministry and witness, death, resurrection and subsequent ascension was often linked to or attributed to an Old Testament prophecy or belief. Yet, all of this must be viewed in connection with God’s mission to bless all humanity. After that the Church era was ushered in, with the ultimate goal of accomplishing God’s mission as described in and throughout the biblical narrative. She too has a role, like Jesus to serve as witnesses and servants to further bless all the nations of the earth.

The Partipatio Christi: Serving Under A New Hermeneutic

The *Participatio Christi* is Latin, which means the gathering of the redeemed ones “sent” to participate in the work of Jesus in this world. Why didn’t Jesus refer to his people as a congregation, an assembly or in relation to the synagogue because these were known and operational concepts at that time? The answer lies in the fact that he wanted to describe what his followers would be like. Therefore, the ecclesia was not to just gather; not just to huddle together and not to pour most of our energies, most of our time and most of our resources on serving one another or their loved ones. It was to participate through word and deed in what God was doing in this world.

Jesus’ ministry is the perfect example of word and deed.⁷ He modeled it to His disciples and “...gave them power and researcherity over all the demons and to heal diseases. And He sent them out to proclaim the Kingdom of God and to perform healing” (Luke 9:1-2). The researcher believes that this is where the traditional biblical view of this concept takes a radical turn from that which is captured in the biblical narrative.

Jesus’ earthly mission was fully intended to continue through Christian believers, beginning with His disciples and their converts and continuing to the end of the age.⁸ Jesus instructed and modeled Kingdom researcherity for His first disciples. Then He chose twelve and called them together and “gave them power and researcherity over all the demons and to heal diseases. And He sent them out to proclaim the Kingdom of God

⁷ The miraculous nature of the term *deed* in the above expression is confirmed in contemporary rabbinic materials according to Geza Vermes, *Jesus the Jew: A Historian’s Reading of the Gospels* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1973), 78-82.

⁸ Jn 5:19-20; Jn 15:14-16; Mt. 10; Lk 10.

and to perform healing.”⁹ They went “preaching the gospel and healing everywhere...When they returned, they gave an account to Him of all they had done” (Lk 9:6,10). Afterwards, Jesus “appointed seventy others, and sent them in pairs ahead of Him...” and told them to “heal those in it who are sick, and say to them, ‘The kingdom of God has come near you’” (Lk 10:1,9). They reported back with joy saying “even the demons are subject to us in Your name” (Lk 10:17).

In short, Jesus called His followers into an intimate relationship with Himself (Mk 3:14), taught them the message of the Kingdom orally (Mk 4:11), showed them the ministry of the Kingdom in His exorcisms and healings, and then sent them with His researcherty and power to do the same (Mk 3:14,15).¹⁰ Jesus linked the miraculous works He did with the ongoing miraculous works He would do through anyone who believes in Him during the post-resurrection period (Jn 14:12).¹¹ As Jesus trained His disciples to reproduce His words and deeds, it should be expected that they would, in turn, train the Church to do the same (Phil 4:9; 1 Thes 1:6).¹²

In contrast to the biblical model, leading Protestant theologians have popularized the view that the work of the Holy Spirit in evangelism after the Apostolic Age was simply limited to proclamation of the Word of God alone leaving out the exercising of

⁹ Lk 9:1,2; cf. Mt 10:1,5-8; Mk 6:7,12,13.

¹⁰ Greig, *Kingdom and the Power*, 182.

¹¹ Greig expresses that the clear grammatical and lexical meaning of this passage has unfortunately been “obscured by some evangelicals. Carson suggests concerning John 14:12: ‘Jesus’ followers perform greater things....Doubtless they may include miracles, but there is not a scrap of evidence to restrict those greater things to miracles...’” Greig further conveys that scholars who have studied the evidence in an “unbiased way” agree that the passage is referring not to ‘greater things’ but ‘greater works.’ For Greig’s full exegesis on this passage see Greig, *Kingdom and the Power*, 393, 394.

¹² Mt 28:18-20; cf. Mk 16:15-20; Lk 24:46-47; Jn 20:21-23.

spiritual gifts. Known as *cessationism*,¹³ this view believes that extraordinary supernatural manifestations through individuals have ceased.¹⁴ Deriving in part from the Western Enlightenment,¹⁵ cessationism emphasizes the power of human reason to determine God's activity, if any. Further, miraculous spiritual gifts, including prophecy, were in some sense *foundational* in that they were necessary for the inaugural spread of Christianity. Since Christianity has been established, the *charismata*¹⁶ is no longer needed to authenticate the gospel.

It is out of this era that the church now finds itself fighting through the ramifications of this period and philosophy. It now finds itself in what is currently considered the post-modern era. As a result of postmodernism, people are looking for experience to validate personal truths. Today, many people stray from Christianity because they are asked to believe in the miraculous doctrines of Christianity without the

¹³ The term *cessationist* or *cessationism* designates the position that miracles ceased or were terminated at or near the end of the apostolic age; that is, when the last apostles died.

¹⁴ There are different forms or degrees of Protestant cessationism. One form of cessationism in the West accommodated Enlightenment antisupernaturalism, allowing God's activity exclusively through natural means. Jon Mark Ruthven, *On the Cessation of the Charismata* (Tulsa, OK: Word & Spirit Press, 2011), 64-72. See also Craig S. Keener, *Miracles: The Credibility of the New Testament Accounts* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2011), 1:260.

¹⁵ The Enlightenment grew to be a period of scientific certainty and human optimism. During this time the Church found itself in combat with forces of secular humanism, which had abandoned God and the need for faith. Science became the new priesthood for the masses. Martin Robinson, "Post What? Renewing Our Minds in a Postmodern World," *On Being* 24:2 (March 1997), 30. Another prominent contributor to cessationism was the conflicts between Rome and the Protestant reformers—notably Calvin see Ruthven, *On the Cessation*, 4; Keener, *Miracles*, 1:102-105.

¹⁶ *Charisma* ("spiritual gift") is an ability that is empowered by the Holy Spirit and used in any ministry of the church. It includes both gifts that are related to natural abilities and gifts that "seem to be more 'miraculous' and less related to natural abilities (such as prophecy, healing, or distinguishing between spirits)...Paul lists spiritual gifts (in Rom 12:6-8,1; 1 Cor 7:7; 12:8-10,28; Eph 5:11)." Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994), 1016-1017.

authentication that the early Church had.¹⁷ Is the Western Church today operating in the fullness of the biblical model that Jesus set forth? Why is there such a void in conversational church growth? Has the Western church moved from the biblical roots of proclaiming the Kingdom of God in power through the operation of the charismata?

The Charismata: It's Role In The Early Church, and Today

Postmodernity in the West has led many to formulate a new paradigm of reality. The late John Wimber, founder of the Vineyard Church Fellowship, expresses that “power encounters authenticate conversion experiences”¹⁸ in a way that mere intellectual assents do not.¹⁹ Further, he states the key to effective personal evangelism is a combination of proclamation and demonstration—preaching and demonstrating the gospel through use of the charismata. Biblical evidence abounds. In Paul’s conversion experience he was not converted through a rational gospel presentation, but rather by a demonstration of God’s power through his experience on the road to Damascus (Acts 9). On Pentecost, 3,000 were attracted through the miraculous outpouring of the Holy Spirit, and because of the miracles done through Philip, the gospel broke through to the Samaritans, etc.

¹⁷ William L. DeArteaga, *Forging a Renewed Hebraic and Pauline Christianity* (not yet published), 6. DeArteaga maintains the dichotomy of seeing miracles in the Bible, but lacking in the modern Church has caused “millions upon millions” to drift into agnosticism and atheism. He states that in contrast, “*Biblical apologetics [is] doctrine and reason authenticated by the presence and gifts of the Spirit.*”

¹⁸ Greig, *Kingdom and the Power*, 148. For an opposing view see John H. Armstrong, “In Search of Spiritual Power,” in *Power Religion: The Selling out of the Evangelical Church*, ed. Michael Scott Horton (Chicago: Moody Press, 1992), 83.

¹⁹ A biblical example can be seen in Paul’s conversion experience. Paul’s conversion was not from a presentation of rational biblical evidence, but rather by a demonstration of God’s power through his experience on the road to Damascus (Acts 9).

Paul wrote of knowing God in an experiential or intimate way (Phil 3:7-10). This is vastly different than the traditional religious understanding of knowing *about* God. Traditional human religion avoids what the scripture emphasizes, which is, communicating directly and intimately with God.²⁰ Paul writes to the Romans, “All who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are the sons of God… The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God” (Rom 8:14,16). This experience of God communicating directly with His people fulfills the New Covenant promise “which seeks to place the Spirit of God directly upon us, to put His prophetic words of power in our mouth (Is 59:21>Acts 2:39), and to place his instructions (Jer 31:33>2 Cor 3; Heb 8-12) or voice ‘today’ (Heb 3:7, 15; 4:7; 12:25) directly into our heart.”²¹

The Western Christian worldview is predominately more rationalistic than spiritual as compared to the Global Majority. Hence, one geographical church is identified by decline while the other is identified by growth. The Kingdom of God in the New Testament is described directly or indirectly as God’s ruling power in action. “But if I cast out demons by the Spirit of God, then the Kingdom of God has come upon you” (Mt 12:28). The very essence of the Kingdom of God is that it “does not consist in words but in power” (1 Cor 4:20). Jesus’ central mission in the New Testament is to inaugurate the Kingdom *in power* and *in word and deed* (Lk 4:23-27; 24:19). Jesus’ signs and wonders are not mere *signs* pointing to the truth of the gospel and its bearer.

²⁰ See John Mark Ruthven, *What’s Wrong With Protestant Theology: Traditional Theology vs. Biblical Emphasis* (Tulsa, OK: Word & Spirit Press, 2012), 215.

²¹ Ruthven, *What’s Wrong*, ii MS. Further, Ruthven proposes that the emphasis of the Bible is to promote the central mandate of mankind, which is to hear and heed God’s voice, and to imitate Jesus who modeled this perfectly.

Cynics have mistaken the signs and wonders of miraculous healing in the ministry of Jesus and the Early Church with the *sign from heaven* demanded of the Pharisees, which Jesus refused to give. Researcher Gary S. Greig explains that Jesus did not denounce *ordinary people* for seeking signs and wonders in His healing ministry;²² rather He denounced stubborn unbelieving religious leaders for demanding a sign from heaven.

Alternatively, miracles manifest the essential core activity of his mission: to displace the physical and spiritual ruin of the demonic kingdom by the wholeness of the Kingdom of God.²³ The New Testament shows that signs and wonders²⁴ are synonymous with miracles.²⁵ *Euaggelizesthai* (to present the gospel) is not just speaking and preaching; it is proclaiming with full power and researcherity. Signs and wonders accompany the evangelical message.

They belong together, for the Word is powerful and effective...It brings *soteria* [“salvation”] (1 Cor. 15:1f.)...Hence, *euaggelizesthai* is to offer salvation. It is the powerful proclamation the good news, the impartation of *soteria*. This would be missed if *euaggelizesthai* [“to preach the gospel”] were to take place in human fashion *en Sophia logou* [“(merely) in the wisdom of words”] (1 Cor 1:17).²⁶

²² Gary S. Greig and Kevin N. Springer, eds., *The Kingdom and the Power: Are Healing and the Spiritual Gifts Used by Jesus and the Early Church Meant for Today?* (Ventura: Regal Books, 1993), 17 (cf. Mt 12:38-40; 16:1-4; Mk 8:11,12; Lk 11:16; Jn 6:30f).

²³ Ruthven, *On the Cessation*, 101.

²⁴ James D.G. Dunn, *Jesus and the Spirit: A Study of the Religious and Charismatic Experiences of Jesus and the First Christians as Reflected in the New Testament* (London: SMC Press, Ltd, 1975), 167. Dunn notes Luke’s free use of the term “wonders and signs.” He uses it far more frequently than other researchers. It is used nine times in Acts and no more than once in any other New Testament document.

²⁵ Healing and deliverance (Acts 14:3,8-10; 8:6,7,13; 5:12,15,16; 4:16,22; Jn 12:17,18; 9:16; 6:2; 4:48,54; Mk 16:17,20); Gifts of the Spirit (Heb 2:3,4; 1 Cor 14:22; Mk 16:17,20); Synonymous with Miracles (2 Cor 12:12; Acts 2:22). See Greig, *Kingdom and the Power*, 133-164.

²⁶ Greig, *The Kingdom and the Power*, 25-26 citing Friedrich, *TDNT* 2:720.

It is here that the researcher believes is one of the major voids within the current missional church practice. Miracles bear witness that the Kingdom of God has come and help those in need.²⁷ Signs, wonders, and miracles were not restricted to the ministry of Jesus²⁸ or the apostles. They were active in the lives of Stephen (Acts 6:8), Philip (Acts 8:5-7,13), Saul (Acts 9:11,12), as well as the Early Church (1 Cor 12-14).²⁹ Miracles also took place within Paul's ministry and the Pauline churches.

The Lord is still performing miracles today. No hint of dichotomy between past and present can be found in scripture. Nowhere does it teach that the miracles of Jesus, the apostles, and laity of the Early Church are not to continue today. The Bible's emphasis overwhelmingly points to the continuation of the gifts. Scripture teaches us that the Lord Jesus and the apostles should be viewed as models for all Christians. In addition, the Bible emphasizes that the charismata will continue during this present age to minister until the complete maturing of the church.³⁰ These gifts of God are irrevocable (Rom 11:29).

²⁷ Mt 4:23; 9:35; 10:6,7; 12:28 || Lk 11:20; Lk 9:2,60; 10:1-2,9,11; Acts 10:38.

²⁸ Jesus' preaching accompanied by healing and deliverance (Mt 4:23; 9:35,36; 10:1,7,8; 11:5; 12:15,18; 15:30; 19:2 [cf. Mk 10:1]; 21:14 [cf. Lk 21:37]; Mk 1:38,39; 2:2,11; 3:14,15; 6:12,13; 10:1 (cf. Mt 19:2) Lk 4:18; 5:17,24; 6:6-11,17,18; 7:22; 9:1-2; 10:9,13; 13:10-13,22,32; 14:4,7ff; 21:37 [cf. Mt 21:14]; 16:15-18,20; Jn 3:2; 7:14-15,21-23,31,38; 10:25,32,38; 12:37,49; 14:10, 12; Acts 1:1; 2:22; 10:38).

²⁹ Other New Testament evidence that shows the Early Church modeled the way the apostles exercised spiritual gifts, proclaimed the gospel, and preached the Word with healing and gift based ministry (Acts 6:8; 8:5-7; 9:11,12; 19:5,6; 21:9; Rom 12:6; 1 Cor 12:8-10,28; 14:1,5,13-15,18; Gal 3:5; Eph 4:7-11; 1 Thes 5:20; Jas 5:14-16; Pet 4:10).

³⁰ 1 Cor 1:4-8; 13:8-13; 2 Thes 1:11-12.

Two Biblical Examples

There's precedent within the biblical narrative which suggest that the missional church operating in words of knowledge is not a new concept or a novel ideal. Ezekiel operated in it (Ezekiel 37:1-14); Jesus operated in it (John 1:43-51, John 4:1-43); the Apostle Peter (Acts 3:1-11) and Phillip to name a few (Acts 8:26-40). While the present-day missional church has been a gift to the Church Universal, most of the methods endorsed by the movement mostly focus on relief work or works that deals with the material needs of people as well as social justice issues. While this is commendable and important, a very essential component has been missed. Conspicuously missing, within current missional methods, is the reliance upon practices empowered by the New Covenant Spirit³¹.

This paper will argue for the need to incorporate the charismata into the traditional present-day practices within the missional church conversation and community. From the biblical record and narrative, there appears to be sufficient evidence, that the concept of the missional church operating in words of knowledge can be observed. Also, the biblical evidence suggests a significantly quicker response to God leading to transformation and comprehensive salvation as a result of the Spirits activity and operation both in Israel and the Church. We now begin with Israel.

³¹ Professor Jon Ruthven has done a great service to the church in his recent book; *What's Wrong With Protestant Theology*, wherein he postulates the goal of God's interaction with man through the Bible. He states that traditional religion has avoided the intimacy that comes with direct communication with God; however, the Bible suggests that such an experience of intimacy" fulfills the promise of both the Old Covenant that is so tragically rejected (Ex.20:18-20; Heb.12), and the New Covenant, which seeks to place the Spirit of God directly upon us, put his prophetic words of power in our mouth (Isa.59:21>Acts 2:39), and place his instructions (Jer.32:33>2Cor.3; Heb.8-12) or voice "today" (Heb.3:7, 15; 4:7; 12:25) directly into our heart." Jon Mark Ruthven, *What's Wrong With Protestant Theology: Tradition vs. Biblical Emphasis* (Tulsa, OK: Word & Spirit Press, 2013) 1. Is this not exactly what Paul writes in Romans 8: 14, 16?

Ezekiel 37:1-14: An Old Testament Pericope

We begin with Ezekiel in the middle of a valley filled with dry bones that was said to have been a representation of the nation of Israel (Ez. 37:11a). They were facing situations and circumstances so grave until the current disposition was one of utter despair and hopelessness (Ez. 37:11b). Though this vision was one of four that the prophet receives and ultimately delivers to the ‘whole house of Israel’, this one paints a very vivid picture of what life was like in a foreign land.

In this pericope, a blueprint for the missional church operating in words of knowledge leading to community transformation seems to be at the core of what is being downloaded into the spirit of the prophet. Ezekiel is taken and placed in this valley by God himself, in order to see firsthand what the people were experiencing, in order to help him minister more effectively to those on the margins and fringes of society. Most people familiar with the core philosophies of the missional church will admit this is an overarching problem. Subscribing to the old evangelical-attractional model vs. the missional-incarnational model demonstrates the contrast of philosophies. Proximity and presence is the preeminent feature to the missional church orthodoxy.

The hand of the LORD was upon me, and He brought me out by the Spirit of the LORD and set me down in the middle of the valley; and it was full of bones. He caused me to pass among them round about, and behold, *there were* very many on the surface of the valley; and lo, *they were* very dry (Ezekiel 37:1-2).

The reality of having “the hand of the Lord upon Ezekiel” speaks to the need of God empowered leadership through the Baptism of the Holy Spirit. Not just as the sanctifier and justifier, as proposed by most traditional missional practitioners but as the empowerer of Kingdom ministry. At the start of Jesus’ ministry, after his baptism and

wilderness experience, returned to the synagogue in Nazareth and proclaimed his commissioning by quoting Isaiah 61:1, 2 and a segment from Isaiah 42:7,

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord” (Lk. 4:18, 19).

Clearly, Jesus described his ministry as one of healing and restoration. If one reads Isaiah 61:1-4 in its entirety, one will witness a more extensive emphasis on these themes. Jesus concluded his reading with a messianic claim, “Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing” (Lk 4:21). He proclaimed that his presence fulfilled the words of the prophets; this is his programmatic declaration.³² He had come as the one sent from God to release healing and restoration for the people of God. Nazareth did not welcome Jesus’ charismatic program nor was it well received by the religious establishment in Jerusalem.

So being anointed and led by the Holy Spirit was the pattern for effective ministry. Ezekiel is placed in the midst of the community, which allowed him to become identified with and better relate to those he was commissioned to minister to. Ministering to people where they were was nothing new. Again, this is one of the bedrock principles within the missional church DNA.

³²Robert H. Gundry, *Commentary on the New Testament* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2010.), 239. Jesus makes a deliberate choice of this text to apply it to his ministry as the one anointed by the Spirit of God. See also: A. E. Harvey, *A Companion to the New Testament*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 227, 228; Fred B. Craddock, “Luke,” *The Harper Collins Bible Commentary*, ed. James L. Mays (New York, NY: HarperCollins, 2000), 934. Jesus is pointing out the nature and purpose of his ministry as well as his rejection by his own people.

However, we are witnessing a paradigm shift to a different aspect of missional church practice; namely, the incorporation of the charismata. Again, it includes both gifts that are related to natural abilities and gifts that “seem to be more ‘miraculous’ and less related to natural abilities (such as prophecy, healing, or distinguishing between spirits). This paradigm shift would be the beginning of a missional church model that would address the mind, body and spirit of the people with its own emerging life and identity. Initially, we see the incorporation of the five-fold ministry gift of prophet. In some sectors of the Church, prophetic ministry is either limited to preaching or rejected outright.

However, since the 1980’s, the restoration of the prophetic ministry has had a tremendous impact of the Global Church. Prophetic ministry attends to what God has to say and calls the covenant people to faithfulness.³³ “Today Jesus continues to give these gifts to the church as he persists in looting potential apostles, prophets, evangelist, etc., from Satan’s kingdom.”³⁴

Prophets receive and communicate the mind and will of God. Jesus uses them to announce His will, unlock mysteries of His Word, bring conviction of sin, and focus the believer on an intimate spiritual and holy life. Prophets are spokesmen of God. The basic foundational function of a New Testament Prophet is for edification, exhortation and comfort.

³³See Alan Hirsch, *The Forgotten Ways: Reactivating the Missional Church* (Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2006), 22, 158.

³⁴Traditional theology sees apostles and prophets essentially as Scripture-writing Popes, inconsistently limiting the first two gifts to the apostolic age, while allowing evangelists and pastor-teachers to continue. On this see Ruthven, *On the Cessation of the Charismata*, 133-140.

After quizzing the prophet about the nature of the vision, God proceeds to download revelation or better yet words of knowledge about what “has” caused the current condition of the nation of Israel that were *unknown* to him and something he was totally unaware of. However, God says:

“Then He said to me, “Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel; behold, they say, ‘Our bones are dried up and our hope has perished. We are completely cut off’” (Ezekiel 37:11).

A word of knowledge is supernatural revelation of information that is given by the Holy Spirit. It has to be supernaturally revealed in order to be a gift of the Spirit (1 Cor 12:7-8). It is not something that the person who gets the word knows by their own senses, rather, it is supernaturally revealed by the Holy Spirit.³⁵ It is here that the researcher believes separates the traditional missional church from the Holy Spirit empowered missional church. As a result of God, providing the man of God with historical information during this encounter in the marketplace, allowed for a more effective and expeditious ministry to occur. Consequently, operating in these gifts of the Spirit brought forth the salvation (healing in mind, body, and spirit) the nation and launched him into healing ministry.

The first aspect being the bones represented the mental state of the ‘whole house of Israel’, which in turn led to this condition. As a result of their current condition, the people had lost “hope” and their despair had led to this dire disposition. Exiled and separated from their homeland, grief has sapped the last ounce of the strength the exiles had. However, that was not the sum total of the incorporation of the charismata. Prophecy becomes a major part of Ezekiel’s ministry. Not in the way most traditional evangelicals

³⁵ See Randy Clark, *Words of Knowledge* (Mechanicsburg, PA: Global Awakening, 2010), 2.

define it, but the actual speaking forth of divinely inspired words given through the Holy Spirit.

"Again He said to me, "Prophesy over these bones and say to them, 'O dry bones, hear the word of the LORD.' Thus says the Lord GOD to these bones, 'Behold, I will cause, so I prophesied as I was commanded; and as I prophesied.....Then He said to me, "Prophesy to the breath, prophesy, son of man, and say to the breath, 'Thus says the Lord GOD....So I prophesied as He commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they came to life and stood on their feet, an exceedingly great army.....Therefore prophesy and say to them, 'Thus says the Lord GOD, "Behold, I will open your graves and cause you to come up out of your graves, My people; and I will bring you into the land of Israel'" (Ezekiel 37:4, 9, 12).

On three different occasions Ezekiel was commanded to 'prophesy' by God, each time, bringing different and distinct degrees of transformation to the community. In another display of the charismata, we observe the consequences of the Spirit's baptism.

Again He said to me, "Prophesy over these bones and say to them, 'O dry bones, hear the word of the LORD.' Thus says the Lord GOD to these bones, 'Behold, I will cause ^{1_g}breath to enter you that you may come to life. I will put sinews on you, make flesh grow back on you, cover you with skin and put breath in you that you may come alive; and you will know that I am the LORD.'" So I prophesied as I was commanded; and as I prophesied, there was a ¹noise, and behold, a rattling; and the bones came together, bone to its bone. And I looked, and behold, sinews were on them, and flesh grew and skin covered them; but there was no breath in them. Then He said to me, "Prophesy to the breath, prophesy, son of man, and say to the breath, 'Thus says the Lord GOD, "Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe on these slain, that they come to life.'"'" So I prophesied as He commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they came to life and stood on their feet, an exceedingly great army. (Ezekiel 37:7-10)

We now see two metaphors come into play, which are often acquainted with the Holy Spirit, the wind and breath. First, Ezekiel is charged with prophesying to the wind, which caused all aspects of the body to come together. However, this presents a strikingly

clear picture that being connected still does not guarantee life. The body had come together but still remained lifeless. Therefore, the second was the breath, which came from the wind. As the prophet prophesied as commanded to the wind, breath (or life) came into the community and now stood as an “exceedingly great army”.

Though many communities around the globe find themselves in dire straits, for one reason or another, God is still actively involved behind the scenes to bring transformation them through.

John 4:1-43: A New Testament Pericope

We now turn our attention to Jesus and the New Testament, with an emphasis on his ministry serving as a ‘type’ of the missional church operating in words of knowledge. We begin by saying that nowhere in the New Testament, the missional church is mentioned by name, however it was the nature of God the Father and now can be seen in the life and ministry of Jesus as well as the early church for that matter. The whole concept of being missional can be summed up through the incarnation of Jesus. Leaving the corridors of heaven and coming to dwell in the midst of his people was the ultimate missional act (John 1:1, 14). When Jesus appoints and sends out his apostles (Matthew 10:1-42) and disciples (Luke 10:1-24) to places where he himself was going to visit, we see another facet of missional ministry in operation within God’s plan for the church.

Though, the phrase missional church does not appear in the New Testament, the ethos of it is interwoven throughout. Types and shadows are a major element of scripture interpretation and by this the missional church has a place within New Testament writings. John 4 is yet another demonstration of incorporation of the charismata within a

missional context. It opens up with a very definitive description of Jesus' divine activities for the day when it says of Jesus, "and He had to pass through Samaria".

We see the chief and ultimate bearer of the Spirit operating as the avatar of five-fold ministry.³⁶ The movement of Jesus into the lives of individuals and groups was simply an extension and continuation of the *missio Dei*. Now the context shifts to a well; Jacob's well in the city of Sychar in the region of Samaria. It was at this well that Jesus meets a woman that has no idea her life is getting ready to be turned upside down. These marketplace encounters are littered throughout the ministry of Jesus and early church.

One does not have to engage in a full blown reconnaissance mission to see the charismata already at work. Jesus was led to this location by the Holy Spirit (John 1:12; Romans 8:14), simply because the Father was already at work in this location. There was no mention of a synagogue, "church" building or any other structural component that was needed for this ministry opportunity to be more effective. Though the topic did arise in conversation, and will be touch on later.

As Jesus encounters the woman, going about her daily routine, he begins to establish a low-level relationship by initiating a non-threatening conversation. Seeing ministry in the "routine" is the thrust of missional ministry. This allows for 'open doors' within natural settings and with whom one can identify with indigenously. (1 Cor. 16:9; 2 Cor. 2:12; Col. 4:3) Fueling this conversation was a deep seeded need that God was getting ready to meet.

Once engaged in conversation, the topic of "where" true worship was to be conducted was entered into. One of ramifications of the Christendom era was the shift

³⁶ In the letter of Ephesians, Paul records what has been known to be called the five-fold ministry (i.e., apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastor and teacher) in Eph. 4:12.

away from marketplace ministry and the construction of massive and ornate church buildings for ‘official’ worship. For the missional church, true worship can happen anywhere and everywhere. As an ambassador of Christ, followers of Jesus are called to ministry as a lifestyle (2 Cor. 5:20), that is not restricted to a time nor a place.

However, a deeper look at this conversation could be perceived as a deflection from a more intimate issue. Therefore, it is at this juncture that charismata, in the form of words of knowledge enters into the equation. Jesus reveals information about her past that would have been unaware to a typical stranger. (John 4:16-19) Receiving and giving words of knowledge has a very profound impact of Kingdom advancement on both the giver and receiver. It breaks down barriers and creates an environment whereby comprehensive healing can occur more immediately. Here we observe a clear and vivid portrait of another template of the missional church operating in words of knowledge.

This, no doubt, grabs the attention of the woman and leads to her salvation and commissioning. Many believe that commissioning comes after years of training and through the recognition of a general body. However, within the missional church’s *modus operandi*, commissioning occurs at conversion. Now as a co-laborer of Jesus, not only does individual transformation happen but community transformation happens as well. This no doubt should be the ultimate aim of the missional church operating in words of knowledge.

Biblical Conclusion

The Bible teaches in both the Old and New Testament the principle of a person receiving an anointing from God. This anointing may be a gift or gifts of the Spirit, a

filling of the Holy Spirit (especially for power) or the baptism in the Holy Spirit. This idea of impartation or transference of anointing is a strong biblical concept.³⁷

Postmodernism has brought back a popular interest in the spiritual and supernatural. Individuals are more open to the charismata, as displayed by the miraculous, signs and wonders “where they live.” This paper seeks to establish the biblical basis for the missional church operating in words of knowledge.

This researcher proposes a biblical discipleship and training program that would bring people into an experiential relationship with the Lord. Its training would focus on *knowing* God, hearing the voice of the Lord, and depending on the Holy Spirit. It would demonstrate God’s Kingdom rule by training in receiving words of knowledge, which leads to healing prayer and deliverance in the marketplace.

Theological Foundations Paper

The etymology of the word *theology* indicates a study of God. It is the *logos* about the *theos*; a word about God. The classic Greek poets were termed theologians since they were writing of the gods. In the early church, speech about God was often labeled theology.³⁸ For the next few centuries, theology was more about the reflections and teaching of God than the “entire corpus of Christian doctrine.”³⁹ At its best, theology is the ongoing high-level catechesis on the subject of God.

³⁷ Clark, *There is More* 16.

³⁸ During the first five centuries of the church *theology* was used to describe a discipline that “leads the soul to the contemplation of the divine.” See Justo L. González, *Essential Theological Terms* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2005), 170.

³⁹ See González, *Essential Theological Terms*, 170.

However, anyone talking about God can be considered a theologian (loosely) and theology takes place in a variety of places. Many believe that it only occurs within the borders and realms of academia but in actuality can take place anywhere by anyone. Theology can be practiced by a theological guild, church leaders and lay persons or even catechumens. Theology is thinking undertaken by the Church in the service of her mission and purpose. Therefore, one must never fail to recognize that theology is not a luxury or an academic game for those inclined. It is necessary in the life of the church.⁴⁰

This theological foundations section shows the research goal of this project is justified by a critical examination of the traditional theological views of current missional church practice held by various theological streams—a practice which we will exemplify in practical experiment, testing its viability. This paper will show how traditional missional church theology minimizes the very doctrines and operations that the New Testament church emphasized and was founded upon: the “power of God unto salvation.” First, the paper will examine the theological impulse of the missional church. Second, it will examine the Trinitarian theological motif of the missional church. And third, it will examine a few central New Testament emphases by comparing traditional missional Protestant hermeneutics to the biblical emphasis.

Missional Church Theology: Back To The Future

Missiology is the study of missions. The terms *missional* and *missional church* originated in the work of a group of North American practitioners, missiologists, and

⁴⁰ The researcher describes this view as first level theology. See Owen C. Thomas & Ellen K. Wondra, *Introduction to Theology* (Harrisburg, PA: Morehouse Publishing, 2002), 2.

theorist called the Gospel and Our Culture Network better known as GOCN.⁴¹ As a discipline, it seeks to identify the primal impulses in the scriptures that compel God's people into the world. A Missional Church is a church that defines itself and organizes its life around its real purpose as an agent of God's mission to the world.

Alan Hirsch, the well-known researcher of The Forgotten Ways, believes the reason why the Church or certain sectors within it is declining is because in most instances she has forgotten her ways; her missional ways.⁴² In regards to being missional, many denominational leaders and church practitioners have admitted guilt in this area.

The call to becoming missional is really a call to primitivism. Primitivism is the desire and quest to recapture and recover the practices of the early (or primitive) church. It seeks to reestablish the purity and power that once characterized the early New Testament church that was “upsetting the whole world” (Acts 17:6[NASB]). As an *ecclesiola in ecclesia*, the missional church is viewed as a movement within a movement. In a broader sense, this concept operates as a movement within established ecclesiastical communions, and in the narrower sense, as subgroups within local parishes.⁴³ This theological concept is illustrated “as a wheel in a wheel” (Ez. 10:16-20).

The missional church is more than just another movement, it is a full expression of which the ecclesia of Christ is and what it is called to be and do. At its core, missional

⁴¹ For a detailed account see Alan Hirsch, *The Forgotten Ways: Reactivating the Missional Church* (Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2006), 81-82; See, Darrell L. Guder, *Missional Church: A Vision for the Sending of the Church in North America* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing, 1998), 6; Craig Van Gelder and Dwight J. Zscheile, *The Missional Church in Perspective: Mapping Trends and Shaping the Conversation* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2011), xix, 1-3.

⁴² See Alan Hirsch, *The Forgotten Ways: Reactivating the Missional Church* (Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2006), 22, 46.

⁴³ Snyder, *Signs of the Spirit*, 33.

is a shift in thinking. This shift in thinking is expressed by Ed Stetzer and David Putman, however not exclusively. They write a shift must occur like this:

- From programs to processes
- From demographics to discernment
- From models to missions
- From attractional to incarnational
- From uniformity to diversity
- From professional to passionate
- From seating to sending
- From decisions to disciples
- From additional to exponential
- From monuments to movements⁴⁴

In actuality, this shift of thinking is what is looked upon as the theological impulse of the missional church.

The researcher believes that this impulse has actually challenged the traditional theological position on church-life and her call to missions. Timothy Tennent, the well-known researcher of *Invitation to World Missions*, acknowledges this very fact. Tennent begins his work by voicing his concern that the way missions mostly has been conceptualized over the last generation is no longer adequate for the peculiar challenges and exciting opportunities that await in the unfolding of twenty-first century missions.⁴⁵

This is causing quite a stir on many fronts, especially within the Church located in the West (i.e., Europe and North America) because for many years all strategies, plans and to a large degree resources came from those regions. This fostered a false sense of reality that led many to develop a disposition of preeminence and dominance. That is no longer the case, as we are witnessing a shift in the area of missions and missiology, from

⁴⁴ See Ed Stetzer and David Putman, *Breaking the Missional Code* (Nashville TN:Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2006), 43.

⁴⁵Tennent, *Invitation to Missions*, 9.

the West to those located in the Majority World regions. It is safe to say that the Church catholicity is going through a major crisis in many areas, becoming missional being one of those areas.

The major concern regarding mission and missions is the role and function of the Church, which seems to always be in the crosshairs in one way or another, in regards to her quest to fulfill the Great Commission. Much debate has centered on the Church's activities themselves and rather or not those activities can truly be considered missions. Several factors have contributed too many errant forms and expressions of missions. Some of those factors include the role of social sciences, the theology of mission versus the missional nature of all theology and the individualistic conceptions of soteriology, to name a few.

So what does missional church theology look like? The biblical narrative clearly indicates that the first century church reflects this theology. Bill Hamon, researcher and widely known bishop of Christian International in Santa Rosa Beach Florida, writes that in regards to understanding true missional church theology we can look to the first century saints movement and her impact in “The kingdom of the world has become *the kingdom* of our Lord and of His Christ” (Rev. 11:15). Hamon writes:

The pattern for the coming Day of the Saints is the Saints Movement that changed the world in the first century. Our understanding of the first-century Saints Movement comes from the Book of Acts and the New Testament epistles. Since the Holy Spirit is restoring all truths and practices that were present in the early Church, it is important that we understand them.⁴⁶

⁴⁶ See Bill Hamon, *The Day of the Saint: Equipping Believers For Their Revolutionary Role In Ministry* (Shippensburg, PA: Destiny Image, 2002), 81.

Our theological and practical plumb line should be simply to emulate the first-century Saints Movement depicted in the Book of Acts and the New Testament epistles. Their behavior and ministry is what true missional theology should be grounded upon. They waited until they were empowered by the Holy Spirit then spread the gospel of the kingdom accompanied by the operation of the miraculous. We are to be fully trained and equipped to be like our first-century model of ministry. This includes being baptized with the Holy Spirit and operating in the charismata in the marketplace. When the church is in mission, it is the true church. The mission of God flows directly through every believer and every community of faith that adheres to Jesus. (Acts 1:5-8) This is our model for missional church theology.⁴⁷

A Trinitarian Theological Framework: The Shaping Of Things To Come

This work will now present a brief description of the Trinitarian theological motif of the missional church. There are many individuals that have helped shape the missional conversation. However, the individual credited for bringing it to the forefront was William Carey. He was the first to propose that missions be invested into with designated resources; both human and monetary. But as time went on the line between or the connection between Ecclesiology and Missiology became blurred.

The question therefore is, ‘how do we understand the term missional and how do we flesh that understanding out? What we believe or understand something to be affects and shapes how we seek to live it out in public. There have been many different influences on the current missional conversation. The historical relationship between the

⁴⁷ Hirsch, *The Forgotten Ways*, 82

Church and missions/mission has not been one of unity. Adherents to both sides have pressed their cases for preeminence, often resulting in division and strife.

“Who does what” is the ultimate issue at the center of debate? There were other concepts that have influenced the missional conversation, but none other seemingly as more timely and relevant than the biblical and theological themes. At the center of this concept was the development of the Trinity and Trinitarian involvement. This concept spawned new conversation about the Kingdom or reign and rule of God and the missio Dei—the God of mission throughout history and the impact it is having on all of creation. Also, this brought the doctrine of Ecclesiology back into discussion but with a different point of reference. What is so striking about this conversation is the absence of Pneumatology and the role of the Holy Spirit within missional church operations. The researcher will deal with this area in more detail later.

This brings us to the Processio and the Missio Trinitatis. The “processio” describes the eternal God’s procession or movement out of eternity toward his creation. This procession act outward towards His creation now incorporates the involvement of the triune God, within the origin of creation. God is described in Genesis 1:1-3.

In this passage, we see God the Father, God the Son in the form of the Word and God the Holy Spirit all present and actively engaged in the creation narrative. The same community involvement is captured in the missional church movement. God the Father reveals Himself as the missio Dei throughout the Old Testament narrative. Then the Father sends the Son to redeem a lost world, the missio Trinitatis. Then the Father through the Son sends the Holy Spirit; this is referred to as the “double procession.”

However, the cycle is not complete as we recognize then that the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit sends the Church (John 20:21-22).

As the Genesis narrative opens up, you witness the Missio Dei (the God of mission) on display and furthermore, you witness God the Father as the source and ultimate goal of mission. From the beginning, God wasn't just a creator of all things but He was also willing to become involved with His creation. Down through human history, as the biblical narrative demonstrates, God's redemptive purposes are in full view for all to see.

As previously stated, all true mission begins with God the Father. However, in the post-Christendom world one must not take for granted someone's usage of the word God. For that word means and represents different things for different people. One must make the distinction as to the fact that they are speaking of or referring to the God that revealed Himself in the Bible, in this present cultural environment. This God is a personal God and has engaged human history with a mission.

Throughout the biblical narrative God demonstrates His sovereignty over the nations, His glory among the nations and the messianic prophecies that speaks to God's involvement with Israel as well as His involvement with the nations, in order to fulfill and complete His mission. The theme of gathering was central to the Abrahamic covenant. This theme is captured in a scene in the New Creation, as multitudes from every nation gather to worship God, in the book of Revelation.

From the God the Father, focus then shifts to God the Son. The mission of Jesus was not only to proclaim the Kingdom of God, but also to embody the presence of the Kingdom of God in his own person. He also goes on to state that one of the fundamental

lessons of the Incarnation is that Jesus is not merely a messenger of good news but the embodiment of it.⁴⁸ It is here in the Incarnation that the missio Dei is profoundly revealed. For it is here that God “Himself” breaks into and intersects with human history to accomplish His redemptive plan. This redemptive plan, which was consummated by Jesus, that included both Israel (particularity) and those belonging to the nations of the earth (universalism).

The Incarnation becomes the ultimate act of translatability. It has been said when God in Christ became a man, Divinity was translated into humanity, as though humanity were a receptor language.⁴⁹ Obviously, being able to effectively communicate and share the gospel is of supreme importance. Be it through various bible translations, even with contributions from ‘pagan’ ideologies and sources, translatability through linguistics is vital. Therefore, linguistics plays a significant part in the translatability of the gospel in the area of mission and missions.

However, the translatability of the gospel must not just be viewed in terms of linguistics but also culturally. The gospel has the ability to enter into any culture in the world, making the entire world a potential for the extension of Kingdom. Jesus’ ministry was based on the addressing the entire man or better yet it took on a holistic approach. The Incarnation of Jesus embodies this principle and it involves both, evangelism and social action.

Lastly, focus now shifts to God the Holy as the empowering presence of the missio Dei. The Church has struggled, during Christendom, the Protestant Reformation,

⁴⁸ See Lesslie Newbigin, *The Open Secret: An Introduction to the Theology of Mission* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1995), 40.

⁴⁹ See Andrew F Walls, *The Missionary Movement in Christian History: Studies in the Transmission of Faith* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1996), 27.

Modernity/ Enlightenment Period up until this present time, with the place, function and role of the Holy Spirit both, in the Trinity and within the field of missiology. This fact has been meticulously chronicled. His role in the Church and in the area of mission and missions is still a matter of great debate. However, one thing is clear; His presence is being experienced in the context of the global church.

The role of the Holy Spirit in the missio Dei is of great importance because without His agency (along with God the Father and God the Son), the church must and will continue to lean upon the human agency of missions, which has been the case for many years. However, there has been a call to revisit the role of the Holy Spirit and how the missio Dei is really carried out in the world, the church and in individual believers. The Holy Spirit is the empowering presence behind the missio Dei, behind the inbreaking of the New Creation. It is this reality that has ushered in the Kingdom of God and has caused the church to live in the tension of “already but not yet.”

The cross and the resurrection always must remain central to the church’s proclamation. However, it is important to recognize that the gospel does not stop at the cross and the resurrection but continues to unfold in God’s ongoing initiatives at Pentecost and the subsequent ministry of the third person of the Trinity in the life of the church. The most interesting thing for this researcher is the dispositions and systemic nature of the church in the West and her desire for self-reliance and human agency. Again, we see the Missio Trinitatis involved in sending out the church. This is the whole premise behind the missional church’s philosophy and the source of power for its strength. Rising up missional churches from a ‘sent’ posture and reality is what this researcher believes God is restoring to His body and in this day. This paper will next

examine a few central New Testament emphases by comparing traditional missional Protestant hermeneutics to the biblical emphasis.

Traditional Missional Practice: What is Missing?

Although the period known as Christendom has passed, residue from its systemic treachery and debauchery still looms large within Protestant theology and practice. The teachings of cessationism and apostolic succession served as a beachhead for which current Protestant theology and leadership structures are built upon.

Cessationism, the belief that miracles and various gifting's of the first century church ceased with the apostolic age, originated from the combination of fallacious reasoning and experiential void. This becomes futile as one excogitates the historical roots of cessationism, studies the Bible's emphasis on the continuation of gifts, and objectively looks at the plethora of modern-day evidence for miracles—especially in the Global Majority. It is an essential study due to the principal effects it has had on traditional protestant theology and traditional protestant practice. By better understanding this human-made doctrine and its development, one can have a fuller understanding of the Western theological mindset. Although its theological influence has been in decline, it still has some significant strongholds in the West—particularly in academia.⁵⁰

⁵⁰ Ruthven points out that the cessationists' doctrine was virtually the general position of older Calvinistic and fundamentalist texts on theology. See L. Berkhof, *Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1953), 177-78; See J. O. Buswell, *A Systematic Theology of the Christian Religion* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1963), 181: "God generally ceased to work through 'sign' miracles when the New Testament was finished; and [it] is His will that the 'miracle of grace,' the witness of the Spirit, answered prayer, and supremely, the written Word, shall be the chief source of knowledge of Himself for His people during this age." A.H. Strong, *Systematic Theology* (Philadelphia: The Judson Press, 1907), 128: "Miracles are the natural accompaniments and attestations of new communications from God...Miracles serve to draw attention to new truth, and ceases when this truth has gained currency and foothold." Jon Mark Ruthven, *On the Cessation of the Charismata* (Tulsa, OK: Word & Spirit Press, 2011), 5-6.

While it is true that cessationism has had a drastic and far reaching effect on the church, the teaching of apostolic succession caused a hemorrhage within its leadership structure. Two major areas suffering during this period as a result was the doctrine of the priesthood of the believer (1 Pet. 2:9) and the five-fold ministry model for church leadership was hijacked and replaced by a hierarchical ecclesiastical system. (Eph. 4:12) Leading into the Protestant Reformation, Martin Luther began teaching on the restoration of the priesthood of the believer.⁵¹

Luther's contemporary, John Calvin, attempted to undercut the Catholic doctrine of apostolic succession, which essentially maintained that the current reigning Pope was the last living apostle. This was significant to Calvin because the Pope had the researcherity to write encyclicals that were as binding as Scripture. So by Calvin dismissing the Catholic modern-day claim for miracles as false, he sought to take the apostolic power that was *confirmed by miracles*, away from the Pope.⁵²

Apostolic succession seemed to take hold in the second century with Irenaeus, the noted churchman from Gaul, serving as its ambassador and spearheading its institution. Distressed over what he felt were error and corruption of the gospel, he wrote a treatise against heresies, describing and refuting them by outlining what he believed to be the true faith. With this he asserted that the apostles had transmitted faithfully and accurately the teachings of Christ. Irenaeus insisted that the apostles had appointed as successors bishops to whom they had committed the churches and in doing so had undoubtedly passed on to them what had been entrusted to the apostolic company by Christ.

⁵¹ Hamon, *The Day of the Saint*, 29. See Hirsch, *The Forgotten Ways*, 60.

⁵² Ruthven, *Global Dictionary of Theology*, 547.

These bishops had been followed by others in unbroken line who was also guarantors of the apostolic teaching in a successive order. The bishops were becoming characteristic of the Catholic Church and whatever the organization, succession in direct line from the apostles was deemed of the essence of the episcopate. As early as the beginning of the second century a distinct chasm had begun to appear between clergy and laity, and this in spite of the fact that in the first century every Christian was held to be a priest unto God. By the end of the second century the clergy had clearly become a separate order with the panopticon being located in Rome.⁵³

Though, the researcher recognizes that Calvin's motivations were focused on limiting the power and researchery of the Pope using the authenticity of miracles, his antagonistic opposition has greatly impacted Protestant beliefs on miracles. The fact is by opposing apostolic succession, the ministry of the apostle was basically taken out of the church. Therefore, the ability to accept the ministry of modern-day apostles and prophets has been difficult. However, history has shown that many catalytic leaders did indeed operate under these grace-gifts.⁵⁴

It is at this point that we can begin to answer the question about what is missing in the current missional church movement. The restoration of this doctrine lies at the heart of the emerging missional church movement. While the missional church has been a gift to the Church Universal, the researcher feels that most of the methods endorsed by the

⁵³ For a more detailed account on apostolic succession See Kenneth Scott LaTourette, *A History of Christianity Vol. 1: to A.D. 1500* (New York, NY: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1953), 131-133.

⁵⁴ See Hamon, *The Day of the Saint*, 29; See Hirsch, *The Forgotten Ways*, 60; See C.Peter Wagner, *The Church in the Workplace: How God's People Can Transform Society* (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 2006), 8, 24-25.

movement mostly focus on relief work or works that deal with the material needs of people as well as social justice issues.

While this is commendable and important, the researcher feels that the movement has missed a very essential aspect. Conspicuously missing is the miraculous work of the Holy Spirit (Charismata), which was so foundational to the birth, rise and spread of Christianity during the first century. For a church to be a missional church, the church also needs to operate in the Charismata. Noted missiologist and researcher Alan Hirsch states:

What is still largely missing from this missional church phenomenon is any sustained and explicit Pentecostal presence, with all its passion and fire. While it is true that Pentecostalism taught us the true value of apostolic ministry, the Pentecostals have not been a noteworthy part of any real expression of EMC, as far as I am aware...As an undercover Pentecostal on assignment myself, I pray for this constantly, as I believe that this is possibly the final missing link that will catalyze this movement into being a true phenomenon in the West.⁵⁵

Though you do have voices coming from the Pentecostal and Charismatic sector of the Church, in regards to utilizing the Charismata in outreach efforts and the operation of five-fold ministry within market place ministry none have embraced a missional church lifestyle that the researcher is aware of and is advocating. There is a difference between being mission-minded and missional.⁵⁶ The point being made here is in most missional

⁵⁵ Hirsch, *The Forgotten Ways*, 271.

⁵⁶ Stetzer, *Planting Missional Churches*, 19.

church material; the function of the third person of the Triune Godhead is mostly limited to the traditional theological view.⁵⁷ C. Peter Wagner states:

For the purposes of building the church, the immediate presence of the Third Person of the Trinity is more important than the immediate presence of the Second Person of the Trinity⁵⁸

It's quite apparent that the Charismata is not viewed in the same way among present missional church practices compared to the first century Jesus movement. Traditional Protestant theology, influenced by cessationism and fundamentalism is the driven force in this arena as well. However, the researcher maintains that the missional church operating in the Charismata, greatly resembles the first century Jesus movement. He contends that this is a seminal manifestation of the Saints movement (Rom. 8:14-16, 19) that Bishop Bill Hamon espouses and writes about.⁵⁹

Most missiologist embrace the doctrine of the priesthood of the believer, which sees every member as a minister. However, how to incorporate the role of the Charismata as well as the grace gifts of the apostle and the prophet within missional theology, continues to serve as a conundrum that has impaired the efforts of the missional church movement. The researcher does not seek to minimize the contributions made by the current missional church movement but simply desires to point out an area of major deficiency. This is where the line of demarcation exist' and is fully evident in current

⁵⁷ Wagner, *The Church in the Workplace*, 32 See John Wimber, *Power Evangelism* (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 1996); See Kevin Dedmon, *The Ultimate Treasure Hunt* (Shippensburg, PA: Destiny Image Publishers, 2007); See Hamon, *The Day of the Saint*, 74.

⁵⁸ Wagner, *The Church in the Workplace*, 21.

⁵⁹ Hamon, *The Day of the Saint*, 45.

missional church material and ideologies. This is the premise where comparison between traditional missional Protestant hermeneutics and the biblical emphasis must occur.

Traditional theology tends to view the Holy Spirit as an “adjunct to extraneous concerns: the Trinity, the procession of the Spirit, ethics and, in Protestantism, the *ordo salutis*.⁶⁰ Biblical theology studies, however, represent the Holy Spirit in an overwhelmingly active charismatic expression. The charismatic Spirit is not merely the Protestant Spirit of consecration and sanctification, but it is fully expressed in the Spirit of revelation, prophecy, miracles, signs and wonders, and deliverance for the purposes of expanding the kingdom of God.⁶¹ As a consequence there is a need to study the biblical emphasis on the role of the Holy Spirit that empowers the church to fulfill the commissioning accounts.⁶² A believer who believes the role of the Holy Spirit is primarily for justification and sanctification will experience just that. No wonder... There is more.⁶³ God is pouring out the Holy Spirit on those who are seeking. It is available for all believers (Jn 14:12).

The Bible’s emphasis overwhelmingly points to the continuation of the gifts. Scripture teaches us that the Lord Jesus and the apostles should be viewed as models for all Christians. Paul tells the Corinthians to “follow my example, as I follow the example

⁶⁰ Ruthven, *Grounding MS*, 30.

⁶¹ The Holy Spirit’s focus on the early church was clearly *external* and fully charismatic in nature. Professor of Theology at Oral Roberts University delineates seven phrases in Acts denote the external coming of the Spirit: 1. The believers are “baptized in the Holy Spirit” (Acts 1:5; 11:16). 2. The Holy Spirit “comes upon” (Acts 1:8; 19:6). 3. The believers are “filled with the Holy Spirit” (Acts 2:4). 4. The Holy Spirit is “poured out” (Acts 2:17,18, 33; 10:45). 5. The believers “receive the Holy Spirit” (Acts 2:38; 8:15, 17, 19; 10:47; 19:2). 6. The Holy Spirit is “given” (Acts 8:18; 11:17). 7. The Holy Spirit “falls upon” (Acts 8:16; 10:44; 11:15). Larry Hart, *Spirit Empowered Christianity in the 21st Century*, ed. Vinson Synan (Lake Mary, FL: Charisma House, 2011), 282.

⁶² Mt 10:7,8, 28:20; Mk 6:7-13; 16:15-18; Lk 9:1,2; 10:1,9; 24:46-49; Jn 14:12; Acts 1:8.

⁶³ Randy Clark, *There Is More* (Grand Rapids, MI: Chosen Books, 2013), 12.

of Christ” (1 Cor 11:1). In addition, the Bible emphasizes the charismata will continue during this present age to minister until the complete maturing of the church (e.g., 1 Cor 1:4-8; 13:8-13; 2 Thes 1:11-12). These gifts of God are irrevocable (Rom 11:29).

God’s Spirit is again sweeping through the United States. The last three decades have been marked by several significant sovereign moves of God—the Pensacola Outpouring, Brownsville Revival, and Toronto Blessing. Professor Candy Gunther Brown, in her groundbreaking study on *Testing Prayer*, reports that the Toronto Blessing meetings drew an estimated 3 million people, including Catholics, Orthodox, and every Protestant denomination.⁶⁴ The tide is turning in the United States. People are searching for the real—not rational.

Conclusion

So as described above, the theological impulse of the missional church differs from the current attractional evangelistic church model. Why is this important? Though, it may seem a small matter, this theological impulse of the way ministry is practiced challenges to traditional Protestant theological practices. Orthodoxy is not the only thing affected by incorrect theology; orthopraxis is as well. Therefore, one must not limit this debate to just that in academia, but to practitioners alike. All of the Truine Godhead is involved and must be factored into the missional conversation.

Especially, the role of the Holy Spirit must become incorporated into missional practice. Those currently producing much of the material that’s available about the missional church have been greatly influenced by traditional Protestant theology. There a

⁶⁴ Candy Gunther Brown, *Testing Prayer: Science and Healing* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2012), 22.

several central New Testament emphases, even within missional context, that does not equate itself to biblical emphasis. The voices within the current missional conversation are numerous. Each is persuaded that their missional activities are informed by correct biblical principles. To that point, one dare not question but to which principles are allowed to operate is always open to discussion. The operation of the charismata within missional church practices is one that warrants such a discussion.

Historical Foundations Paper

The story of Christianity is not only old: it is also ever new. In each age it must be told afresh.⁶⁵ Not that the recollection of its stewards may not have been as crisp as their predecessors but because new events have occurred that add to its narrative. These events that function as reality by the criteria of one culture, even when foreign to others, shape its history. And it can be rightly stated that there have been scores of events that have shaped all of history. However, those who openly view the present through the wide-angle lens of history, are always forever indebted and yet all the more richer as a result.

History teaches us that Christianity and subsequently, the church have proven to be many things throughout the course of history. For better or for worst, this history is a narrative about the human story, shaped by divine design. A significant aspect of this history is the fact that periods of advancements followed by periods of decline are all too familiar within this historical construct. According to the “wave theory,” as espoused by Kenneth Scott LaTourette, there has always been this ebb and flow reality within the realm of Christianity. Regarding the declinations and surges that have been a constant presence throughout its existence He states,

⁶⁵ See Kenneth Scott LaTourette, *A History of Christianity Vol. 1: to A.D. 1500* (New York, NY: Harper & Row Publishers, 1953), xxi.

After its origin, the course of Christianity is treated by what the researcher deems to have been major epochs. These, as he conceives them, are best seen as pulsations in the life of Christianity as reflected in its vigor and its influence upon the ongoing history of the race. The lines between the eras are fuzzy. One age has a way of running over into its successor or being foreshadowed before it's born. Advance and retreat often begin at different times in the several areas in which Christians are found and first indications of revival are frequently seen before a decline has been halted.⁶⁶

This work will build upon the Biblical Foundations section by showing that throughout history, God has had an active role in the advancement of his Kingdom and in human affairs. This work will now present a brief and select survey on the history of missional church development, Christendom and the impact it had on the missional church and what seems to be the heartbeat of God today, in regards to the missional church. It is a proven fact that God has always been moving outward toward mankind to make Himself known and involved others in that mission. Those individuals empowered by the Holy Spirit and its gifts have had a tremendous impact on the Global Church, although the Church has over the course of time, departed from their use.

From the days of the Early Church to the present, we see a timeline marked by the revealed power and presence of charismata in the lives of God's instruments. Jesus' commission to the disciples to "heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, cast out demons" (Mt 10:8 [New American Standard Bible]) has been a normative role of the believer throughout Church history. This historical foundation section will attempt to show that the biblical gifts of the Holy Spirit; the charismata have continued, without ceasing, since the apostolic age. There were, however, certain events in history that

⁶⁶ LaTourette, *A History of Christianity Vol. 1*, xxi.

unmistakably hindered their broad acceptance—particularly in the Western Church and Western Church theology.

First, the paper will examine the historical development of the missional church. Second, it will examine the period known as Christendom and the impact it had on the missional church. Third, it will examine the reemergence of the Charismata and the subsequent ramifications for missional activity in the lives of a few individuals that shaped the Christian church and its history.

God With Us: The Ensign Of The Missional Church

Mission to the nations would have been legitimate even if Jesus had not given the Great Commission because it is a part of the whole story of the Bible. The biblical narrative could be utilized to make the following summations; God as a missional God, God's people as a missional people and scripture as a missional document. As a result of having this perspective, one could very easily conclude God's purpose, the church's purposes, and the function of scripture as missional.

From a historical standpoint, the procession and missio Dei can be traced back to the Johannine writings captured in John 1 and John 15, Nicene Creed and Thomas Aquinas. The thinking that mission is God's divine prerogative, has come out of missiological reflection on colonialism that had been part and parcel of the church's missiological enterprise during the Enlightenment modern period. The mission of God was highlighted during the 1910 Edenburg conference, the 1952 International Missionary conference in Willingham, Germany and made popular by George Vicedon's book in 1963. However, it was the German missiologist Karl Hartenstein that coined the term

“missio Dei” in 1934, describing and summarizing Karl Barth’s teaching on the Trinity and mission in 1928.

The missio Dei was developed and formulated to relocate mission and shift it from the Church to God. The Church participates and shares in this work in the power of the Holy Spirit. Scripture should be looked upon as a missional document through the lenses of a missional hermeneutic; God’s missional work in creation, in Israel, in the Church and in the world. This reflects the Immanent processio of God and is expressed in the Economic Trinity; the missio Dei.⁶⁷

Christendom and Its Effect On The Missional Church

This work will now present a brief and select survey on the history of Christendom and the impact it had on the missional church. The transformation of the church for a marginal layperson church movement to a central institution started with the Edict of Milan (AD 313) in the fourth century. The church shifting from the margins of society to its center is seen as one of the most catastrophic for missional church operations. It was during this time that the church lost her missional way or edge and became centralized.

The Reformation began in 1517 when Martin Luther, an Augustinian monk, nailed his *Ninety-Five Theses* to the door of the Wittenberg church. In rebuttal to the perceived abuses and debris of medieval Catholicism, leaders of the Reformation were fighting for a new theology against those who claimed the researcherity of miracles and revelation as proof to their doctrine’s legitimacy. The Reformation leaders worked to rid the church of superfluous practices such as unction and indulgences. In the process, they

⁶⁷ Dr. Peter Bellini, The Missional Church, UTS classroom notes, 2011.

rejected the miracle claims. “The Reformers’ anti-supernaturalism served their immediate polemic situation against the Catholic apologetic use of miracle claims.”⁶⁸

Luther’s stance on miracles did vary according to his teaching application. However, the influence of Martin Luther and John Calvin was significant. Even today, nearly all of Protestant theology proceeds from them. Though their reasons for rejecting miracles are numerous and debatable, it makes little difference, for they saw healing as a dispensation given only to the biblical Church. The Western Church’s worldview has become more skeptical of miraculous healing and the gifts of the Spirit since Aquinas (ca. 1250) in part and the Reformation (1517) in general.

However, the restoration of doctrine of the priesthood of the believer was one of the many positives that resurfaced as a result of the Reformation. This doctrine is significant because of the role it plays within missional church life. The belief that every member is a minister is a bedrock teaching to this movement, as it was to the Early Church. It will be highlighted in the next section of this paper. Though there was an unfortunate departure from the normality of miracles, signs and wonders, the tide was about to turn yet again.

The Reemergence of The Charismata

It is evident that the gifts of the Spirit made a grand resurgence during the twentieth and beginning of the twenty-first century.⁶⁹ Along with the increase on charismata, there has

⁶⁸Craig S. Keener, *Miracles* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Publishing, 2011), 374. In context, the Reformers’ were reacting against the notably prolific account of miracles claims right before the Reformation. Keener notes “more than 12,500 miracles stories from Bavaria, from 1350 to 1520, remain extant.” Most were only three decades before the Reformation.

⁶⁹ Within the past thirty years there has been a 700 percent increase in Pentecostal believers, which represent about a quarter of the world’s Christian population and two-thirds of all Protestants. Allan Anderson, *An Introduction to Pentecostalism: Global Charismatic Christianity* (Edinburgh: Cambridge

been a move towards personal and experiential relationship with the Lord. In essence, religion is being traded for relationship. Postmodernity has also played a vital role and will be expanded upon in the next two sections. Randy Clark words it well: “Every major revival of the twentieth century involved God attempting to restore His control over the church in an experiential way, not just in a theological or doctrinal understanding of this reality.”⁷⁰

SPECIFIC EXAMPLES: FUEL FOR MY FIRE

Desert Monks

Now space will be given to a group and a few individuals that can be seen having truly powerful missional operations as a result of the Charismata. This paper examines these simply because of the impact their activities have had in shaping Christian history, through missional lenses. Discouraged with the worldliness of the church, increasing numbers of Christians fled to the deserts of Egypt to regain the purity of the early Church. These would go on to establish what would become known as monasticism and monastic communities.

The writings of these desert monks reveal an intense inner life combined with the belief in healing and deliverance. Frequently, in monastic writing, it was reported how these hermits tried to overcome all desire for physical satisfaction and described their

University Press, 2004), 2. In 2008 there were 601 million Pentecostals, ‘Charismatics,’ and ‘Neocharmistics’ in the world (projected to rise to 798 million by 2025). David Barrett, *et al.*, “Missions 2008: Reality Checks for Christian World Communions,” *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 32:1 (Jan 2008), 30.

⁷⁰ Randy Clark, *There is More* (Grand Rapids, MI: Chosen Books, 2013), 100. Clark maintains this is true with “the initial Pentecostal Outpouring with Parham in Topeka, Kansas 1901; the Welsh Revival of 1904; the Pentecostal Revival of Azusa Street in 1906; the Revivals in the 20s and 30s under Smith Wigglesworth and a host of other Pentecostal Healing Evangelists; the 1947 Latter Rain Revival; the 1948 Healing Revival; the Charismatic Renewal of the 1960’s; the Jesus Movement of the late 1960s and early 1970s; the Third Wave Movement of the 1980s, and the *Laughter Revival* of the 1990s.”

world of visions, healings, and power over demons. Some of these men and women spent years in solitude working, praying, and fasting.

These desert monks lived a life of personal obedience and sacrifice in attempt to regain the purity of the early Church. Their lives were full of healings and encounters with the Lord. The extent of their spirituality deeply penetrated the Christianity of their age and their influence was evident in both the Eastern and Western Church for years to come on. One area was the presence of the Charismata in their daily lives. Spiritual gifts were often in full operation within their ordained activities. Also, these communities became hubs for missional activity and operations, through evangelism and discipleship.

Establishing other such communities became a major part of their protocol. Training and equipping others to lead a life of purity, obedience and service was at the forefront of these monastic orders. G.K. Chesterton writes, “Recovery from the decline which Christianity had suffered in Western Europe between the years 500 and 950 found expression and was furthered through fresh monastic movements”.⁷¹

Francis of Assissi

As eluded to earlier, the Christian faith produced outstanding personalities and important movements in thought and organization. One such movement was the Franciscans, whose founder was Francis of Assissi. What was eventually the largest of the mendicant orders in its numerous branches was what officially is designated as the Order of Little Brothers or Friars Minor (*Ordo Fratrum Minorum*, abbreviated as O.F.M.), but popularly is known as the Franciscans.

⁷¹ See G. K. Chesterton, *Saint Francis of Assissi* (Lexington, KY: Made in the USA, 2013), 45; See Augustine Thompson, *Francis of Assissi: A New Biography* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2012), 416.

Francis is one of the most winsome figures of Christian history. At first he was a

The conversion of Francis to the life of religion was not a sudden dedication, but came as

the result of a spiritual pilgrimage of many months, which began in late adolescence. It

was partly induced by illnesses and disappointments and was marked by painful and

intense struggles of the spirit and in its earlier stages by relapse into the former way of

life.

Frustration would soon overcome him and suddenly unsure that this was the life

God had chosen for him, he headed back to Assissi, where he had the experience that

would change his life forever. An encounter with lepers would always be for Francis the

core of his religious conversion. Wherever this leprosarium was, Francis lodged there

with the residents and earned his keep caring for them. It was during this time that God

was stirring the heart of this man from Assissi and that stirring would have a ripple affect

far beyond what anyone could have imagined.

The moving outward into the lives of others is the essence of the missio Dei and

missional church operations. Though not directly stated, one can observe that something

of a deeply spiritual nature was fueling this transformation.

Then the Spirit of the LORD will come upon you mightily, and you
shall prophesy with them and be changed into another man. It shall
be when these signs come to you, do for yourself what the
occasion requires, for God is with you (1 Sam 10:6-7).

This point exactly illustrates what has already been suggested; that the Franciscan

renascence was a fresh start and first awakening after a forgetfulness of paganism.

Certainly it is responsible for certain freshness in the thing itself. Anyhow Saint Francis

was, as it were, “the founder of a new folklore.”⁷² The Franciscan order did not fossilize neither did the missional work it set out do.

Count Nicolaus von Zinzendorf

Another individual that was used by God within the missional church construct after having a powerful encounter of the Spirit was Nicolaus Ludwig, the Count of Zinzendorf. Count Nicolaus von Zinzendorf was one of the great enigmatic, appealing, controversial, totally spontaneous and yet contradictory figure of the Christian church. Zinzendorf sprang from that sector of the German nobility, which had been influenced by Spenerian Pietism.

Through a sequence of events, in 1722 Rothe introduced Christian David to Count Zinzendorf. The young count was intensely interested in David’s story of the awakening and oppression in Moravia. “Let as many as will of your friends come hither,” he said; “I will give them land to build on, and Christ will give them rest.” The Church.⁷³ David immediately returned to Moravia and in May 1722 led the first group of ten persons secretly across the border into Saxony. The group arrived at Zinzendorf’s estate at Berthelsdorf on June 8. Zinzendorf’s steward, Johann Heitz, gave the settlement the new name Herrnhut, which means “watched by the Lord.” Toward the end of December 1722 Zinzendorf visited Berthelsdorf with his wife and for the first time made the acquaintance of the Moravian émigrés.

Beginning in 1722, a few refugees from the persecutions of Protestants in Bohemia and Moravia settled on the estates of Count Zinzendorf. Sensitive, able, with a global,

⁷² Chesterton, *Saint Francis*, 69.

⁷³ See Howard A. Snyder, *Signs of the Spirit: How God Reshapes the Church* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 1997), 126.

encompassing imagination, this young nobleman had been reared in a strongly Pietist atmosphere and had been educated at Halle. He also had an intense desire to spread the Christian faith throughout the world. In the handful of persecuted refugees he saw the means of fulfilling that vision. He identified himself with them and became a bishop of their church, and through him missionaries from among them went out to various parts of the world.

The developments at Herrnhut were not simply the result of Zinzendorf's leadership and force of personality. They sprang also from a significant spiritual awakening which swept the Herrnhut community in August of the critical year of 1727. This event has been seen as the beginning of the Moravian Church. Zinzendorf described this day as "a day of his outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon the congregation and its Pentecost."⁷⁴ What happened at Herrnhut in 1727 and in the decade that followed could properly be called a charismatic renewal or community revitalization through the activity of the Holy Spirit. Though glossolalia apparently was not a part of the community's experience. Various kinds of manifestations of the Spirit, and particularly miraculous cures, were in evidence about 1731.

Moravian communities existed primarily for mission, and especially for foreign missionary outreach. The rapid deployment of many young missionaries around the world in the space of a few years is one of the most remarkable Moravian achievements. Ironically, it would be carrying out this very assignment that God was getting ready to shake the church once again.

John Wesley

⁷⁴ Snyder, *Signs of the Spirit*, 133.

At the beginning of the eighteenth century, churches both in Great Britain and the colonies were “demoralized and lethargic”⁷⁵ from the influence of deism among the educated clergy. The preaching of men like John Wesley, George Whitefield, and Jonathan Edwards energized the First Great Awakening, which was often accompanied by a demonstration of the power, presence, and love of God, which included unusual manifestations.⁷⁶

Wesley, who spent more time in the forefront of revival than in academic circles, challenged the cessationist views of his contemporaries. His journal is abundant with accounts of healing miracles. His brother, Charles, was raised from a debilitating attack of pleurisy and Wesley even records a dead man returning to life after he prayed for him.⁷⁷ The fruit of this revival was evident. In one three-year period, at least thirty thousand persons were converted in New England alone.⁷⁸ How did it start?

In 1734, a group of Moravian missionaries arrived in London seeking permission from the Trustees of Georgia to go to America for the sake of religious liberty and opportunity of preaching the gospel. A second group of twenty-six reached London in 1735. It was this group, which sailed on the *Simmonds* to Georgia, that met another

⁷⁵ William L. DeArteaga, *Forging a Renewed Hebraic and Pauline Christianity* (not yet published), 131.

⁷⁶ Regarding the manifestations, DeArteaga explains that Calvin’s cessationism unintentionally destroyed the capacity for spiritual discernment. Christians throughout history have had unusual spiritual experiences, but Reformed theology would be quick to dismiss them because no present-day *mystical* experiences would be of the Lord. DeArteaga, *Forging*, 84.

⁷⁷ Keener, *Miracles*, 383.

⁷⁸ Clark, *There is More*, 80. Fifty thousand people were converted in all of the colonies. If these figures were adjusted for our current population, it would be equal to five million conversions today.

change agent by the name of John Wesley. He was an Oxford scholar and newly ordained Anglican priest.⁷⁹

The long weeks on board ship to Georgia gave Wesley his first opportunity to observe the Moravian Brethren closely. What impressed Wesley was not only the Moravians' piety and good works but also their calm assurance of faith during storms at sea—something he lacked. In Georgia, Wesley's zeal for holiness became a burning desire to revitalize the church" and to build a model Christian community in one Anglican parish. Wesley thought he saw in the Moravians some genuine elements, at least, of early Christianity, and he tried some of their methods.

These were critical times for Wesley. He was seeking the true understanding and experience of salvation by faith. Wesley broke the faith barrier on Wednesday, May 24, 1738, about three weeks after Böhler departed for America. His famous heart-warming experience came during a meeting on Aldersgate Street, and Wesley himself saw the experience as the critical turning point in his spiritual quest. It is worth noting that this crucial experience, from which so much was to follow, occurred in the context of a small religious society meeting.

As already noted, religious societies were common in England at this time, although as a movement they were in decline. The Fetter Lane Society as well as the Holy Club and numerous other societies Wesley formed or was involved in, have to be seen in this context. But the Fetter Lane Society was markedly Moravian in inspiration, due especially to the influence of Peter Böhler. Wesley now had a newfound assurance of faith, a supportive group to share his life with and an expanding preaching ministry.

⁷⁹ See Snyder, *Signs of the Spirit*, 133; See Howard A. Snyder, *The Radical Wesley and Patterns For Church Renewal* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 1980), 126.

Now, finally, he saw that his long-standing dream of a real restoration of primitive Christianity within the Church of England was possible.⁸⁰

After returning to London, Wesley plugged right into the existing network of religious societies. The flame was spreading from cell to cell. The stir of a new awakening was in the air. George Whitfield, evangelist and former Oxford colleague of the Wesley's, while preaching in Bristol sent for John Wesley, recognizing his preaching power and organizing skill. Up to that point, however, Wesley had preached only in regular church services while in England. Open-air meetings would be new to him. Sunday evening Wesley spoke to a little society on the Sermon on the Mount and the next day the crowds swelled to thousands.

Characteristically, Wesley immediately began to organize. He formed a number of societies and bands and on May 9 acquired a piece of property where he built his "New Room" as a central meeting place. After being left totally in charge after Whitfield's departure back to America, the Wesleyan Revival had begun. From the beginning it was a movement largely for and among the poor, those whom "gentlemen" and "ladies" looked on simply as part of the machinery of the new industrial system. The Wesley's preached, the crowds responded and Methodism as a mass movement was born. Wesley soon discovered that some of his helpers had gifts for exhortation and preaching, and he put them to work. In 1744, he began a series of annual conferences with his preachers at which questions of doctrine, discipline and strategy were discussed.

The main difference between the Methodist societies and the many other religious societies then functioning was that these were directly under the supervision of Wesley

⁸⁰ Snyder, *Signs of the Spirit*, 133; Snyder, *The Radical Wesley*, 126.

and were united chiefly in his person. Of the rise of the Methodist societies Wesley says characteristically, “Upon reflection, I could not but observe, this is the very thing which was from the beginning of Christianity.”⁸¹ By the late 1740’s Methodism had set its course. The People called Methodist” seemed to be everywhere. Wesley saw them as a renewing force within the Church of England, committed to proving in experience what the church professed in doctrine. Methodism was the offer of God to all, but also the power of God for transformed living in all who believed.”

Methodism under John Wesley became a massive movement of common people, the “disinherited masses”⁸² to whom the gospel was totally foreign. It grew into a disciplined movement, which made some people nervous. But Methodism was, above all, a movement of spiritual renewal. It was a mass movement of people coming to know the power of God and the power of genuine Christian community in their daily lives. It is therefore one of the primary examples in history of the renewing work of the Holy Spirit in community revitalization.

William Seymour

The move of the Spirit continued in powerful revivals all through the nineteenth century challenging the doctrine of cessationism at the very time it was reaching the pinnacle of influence. By the middle of the century a more encompassing and consistent healing movement grew from the congregations that were accentuating holiness. This *Holiness movement* advocated divine healing was in the atonement, and therefore was

⁸¹ See Snyder, *The Radical Wesley*, 35, 49.

⁸² Ibid, 125.

available to all.⁸³ This diametrically opposed the previously stated belief that Christians should passively submit to their sufferings without resistance.

Another crucial tenet of this movement was the *second work of grace* that followed initial regeneration. This subsequent experience filled one with the power of the Holy Spirit enabling one to “experience sanctification—practical victory in [his or her] daily experience, not just positional victory in the spiritual realm and the life to come.”⁸⁴ The stage was now set for the next outpouring of the Spirit.

Church historian Vinson Synan has stated that Pentecostalism in America was “born in the holiness cradle.”⁸⁵ Pentecostalism’s theological father is arguably Charles Fox Parham who first formulated the concept of glossolalia (i.e. speaking in tongues) as *initial physical evidence* of the baptism of the Holy Spirit.⁸⁶ However, it was William Seymour with the Azusa Street revival (1906) that facilitated its global spread.⁸⁷ Directly or indirectly, every classic Pentecostal movement around the world can trace their spiritual roots to the humble beginning on Azusa Street.⁸⁸

⁸³ Keener, *Miracles*, 390.

⁸⁴ Clark, *There is More*, 87. Out of this return to *Christus Victor* came the Faith-Cure movement where healing was “not merely an unexpected byproduct of fervent prayer but the result of intended and directed prayer efforts.” DeArteaga, *Forging*, 187.

⁸⁵ Henry I. Lederle, *Theology with Spirit: The Future of the Pentecostal & Charismatic Movements in the 21st Century* (Tulsa, OK: Word & Spirit, 2010), 12. Keener suggests that apart from its addition of speaking in tongues, Pentecostalism was in-line with the ideals of the healing movement from the turn of the century. Keener, *Miracles*, 413-414.

⁸⁶ There is debate among scholars regarding the historiography of Pentecostal origins. For example, the revival at Pyongang in Korea in 1903 predated the Welsh revival (1904) and Azusa Street revival (1906). In addition the Indian revival associated with Pandita Ramabai’s Mukti Mission in Poona (1905-1907) also started before the Azusa Street revival.

⁸⁷ Vinson Synan, *An Eyewitness Remembers the Century of the Holy Spirit* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2010), 19-21.

⁸⁸ Ibid, 25.

This first wave of the Spirit in the twentieth century led to a widespread reassessment of the role and value of the miraculous and supernatural. With it, dramatic spiritual experiences of God's power and healing miracles were being displayed on a wide-scale for the first time in many years. With it, the Person of the Holy Spirit was brought to the forefront after centuries of neglect from the Western Church.

It happened in Los Angeles, California, in the spring of 1906. A one-eyed black Holiness preacher named William J. Seymour experienced a deep touch of God in his life on the night of April 12. He relates that divine love melted his heart. He heard prophetic words of healing and encouragement in his soul, and out of his innermost being adoration and praise poured forth in a strange and beautiful language he did not know. He was empowered by the Holy Spirit to pioneer a remarkable move of God in the twentieth century.⁸⁹

Within days...an unprecedented "Holy Ghost" revival began that would last three and a half years, turning the established religious world upside down. Meetings were held at the Apostolic Faith Mission three times a day, often stretching daily from morning until midnight. Lederle writes, "This Azusa Street awakening signaled the birth of classical Pentecostalism."⁹⁰

It was during his years in Indianapolis, Indiana that William Seymour claimed to have had a conversion experience. While it was during this time that Seymour undoubtedly gained his appreciation for the teachings of John Wesley, the founder of

⁸⁹ See Cecil M. Robeck, Jr., *The Azusa Street Mission and Revival: The Birth of The Global Pentecostal Movement* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2006), 60.

⁹⁰ Lederle, *Theology With Spirit*, 1.

Methodism, Seymour soon left the Methodist church. William Seymour moved to Cincinnati, Ohio that fall to pursue his studies, and once again he found work as a waiter.

During the few years Seymour lived in Cincinnati, the city was swept by an invasion of smallpox. William Seymour contracted the disease. In his bout with this deadly disease, Seymour incurred some of the scarring that usually comes to survivors. As a result, he lost one eye and it was replaced with an artificial one. As Seymour reflected on this event, he saw the Lord's hand in it. He came to believe that the Lord had called him into ministry and he had been slow to respond. The result was that God had sent this plague upon him as a form of chastisement, a reminder of his call to ministry. In 1903 Seymour left Cincinnati intent upon fulfilling that call.⁹¹

When Seymour left Cincinnati he traveled to Houston, Texas, some say in search of relatives. Whatever the reason, from 1903 through 1905 Seymour made Houston his home base and began to preach in a local black holiness church. Seymour was a short stocky man...with an inquiring mind and a hunger to learn more about the Bible and theology. Hearing of Parham's new school, he determined to improve his religious training if possible. The racial customs of the South dictated that Seymour, a black, could not attend Parham's school. However, his great desire to attend classes and his apparent thirst for knowledge led Parham to allow him to attend the Bible classes during the day. Since blacks could not legally sit in the same classroom with whites, Parham permitted Seymour to sit in the hallway and hear his lectures through the open door. For several months Seymour heard the new Pentecostal theology from his teacher Parham.

⁹¹ Robeck, *The Azusa Street Mission*, 60.

Within a month after school began, Seymour received an invitation asking him to accept the position as pastor of a relatively new holiness mission in Los Angeles. In spite of the lack of support from Parham and Carothers, William J. Seymour decided to accept the invitation. It was only when the newly arrived preacher introduced the subject of speaking in tongues and its relationship to the baptism in the Spirit that the founding pastor became upset. It sounded similar to the “third work” theology that most holiness people had already rejected as heresy. When Seymour arrived for the evening meeting Mrs. Hutchins had locked the door and refused to admit in.

Seymour could no longer serve at the Ninth and Sante Fe mission. During his stay with the Lees in the early days of March, Seymour and the Lees would pray together. Others from the Ninth and Sante Fe mission joined them. As the prayer meeting grew, other African Americans joined Seymour, the Lees and the Asberrys. On Monday, April 9, a number of people had already arrived at the Asberry’s home waiting for the meeting to start. Elder Seymour began to speak using Acts 2:4 as his text and no sooner had he completed the story when someone in the group began to speak in tongue. The whole company was immediately swept to its knees as by some mighty power. Over the next three days he Asberry home became the focus of attention within the various networks of Los Angeles Wesleyan holiness people.

On Thursday, April 12, after a long evening spent in prayer, William Seymour finally received his baptism in the Spirit, falling on the floor as though dead and then speaking in tongues. As Seymour and his flock thought about their next move, someone mentioned the now vacant building on Azusa Street. William Seymour and his new

congregation negotiated a lease with the First African Methodist Episcopal Church for their old facility just before Good Friday, April 13, 1906.

It would cost them eight dollars a month. Seymour began to preach to the crowds that followed him from Bonnie Brae Street. No sooner had Seymour begun preaching in the Azusa location than a monumental revival began. Scores of people began to “fall under the power” and arise speaking in other tongues.

Men and women would shout, weep, dance, fall into trances, speak and sing in tongues, and interpret their messages in English. In true Quaker fashion, anyone felt “moved by the Spirit” would preach or sing. Pentecost has come to Los Angeles, the American Jerusalem. Indeed by the end of the year many other missions had been opened in the Los Angeles area and others were beginning to operate in cities all over the United States, as visitors to Azusa Street carried the “fire” to their own homes.⁹²

People from an amazing variety of ethnic, social, national, and denominational backgrounds experienced loving fellowship and unity as they crowded into the meetings. There were more clamoring at the doors and windows to experience something of this fresh wave of God, to witness the gracious demonstrations of miracles of healing and repentance and dramatic signs of a present-day outpouring of God’s Spirit. Remarking on the interracial mingling, most exceptional at the time, journalist uttered the frequently quoted line: “The color bar was washed away in the blood of Jesus”.⁹³

Within a few months or years (depending on the case), the first missionaries departed to spread this Pentecostal fire to Norway, England, Sweden, and Germany in Europe, to Brazil and Chile in South America, to India, South Africa, the Soviet Union,

⁹² Robeck, *The Azusa Street Mission*, 62-68.

⁹³ Ibid., 60.

and further afield. Under the humble leadership of Seymour, an international movement had started.

A century later, in the year 2006, demographers estimated the global membership of Seymour's legacy---the various Pentecostal and Charismatic Renewal movements of the twentieth century---at 600 million.⁹⁴

The spread of Pentecostalism is still viewed as nothing short of spectacular. What is also surprising is the debates that still rage on the subject of Pentecostalism. Though the affects from this movement can't be denied, the economy of the charismata is. However, if the polemic of this movement was not enough, once again something new was on the horizon and another change agent was getting ready to come onto the scene.

The earliest stirrings of what is being dubbed the Second Wave (with Classical Pentecostalism as the First Wave) are found in a number of ministries of Pentecostal persuasion, which began reaching those outside the Pentecostal fold.⁹⁵

Dennis Bennett

The second wave of the twentieth century, *Denominational Charismatic Renewal* (or later termed the *Charismatic Renewal*), was said to have begun on April 3, 1960. Dennis Bennett, an Episcopal priest, told his parish he had experienced the power and fullness of the Holy Spirit and had received the gift of unknown tongues. These charismatics remained within their mainline non-Pentecostal denominations. The ensuing

⁹⁴ Lederle, *Theology With Spirit*, 1-2.

⁹⁵ Lederle, *Theology With Spirit*, 91.

charismatic awakening that followed touched nearly every denominational tradition within Protestantism.⁹⁶

The landmark of the denominational renewal movement was an announcement on April 3, 1960, by Dennis Bennett, an Episcopal priest at St. Mark, Van Nuys, California, to his parish. He told them that he had experienced the power and fullness of the Holy Spirit in his life and that this included the gift of unknown tongues. This caused a great stir and led to his resignation. Nevertheless, he took the ecclesiological significant step of staying with his denomination. Up to this point, those in mainline churches who had received the gift of glossolalia either kept it to themselves or choose to become Pentecostals.⁹⁷

Dennis Bennett became a national celebrity and a precursor of the neo-Pentecostal movement in America. In the late 1950's Father Bennett was rector of the fashionable St. Mark's Episcopal parish in Van Nuys, California. By 1959, his parish had grown to include some 2,600 members and a staff of four ministers, when he heard about the baptism in the Holy Spirit from a fellow Episcopal clergyman. After seeing some laypersons in his church who exhibited a high degree of commitment and spirituality, Bennett began to seek answers about the Pentecostal experiences.

After a thorough investigation, he became convinced of the reality of the baptism in the Holy Spirit although he tended to view speaking in tongues as a "red herring" and quite unnecessary. Yet he hungered for a deeper reality in his Christian experience. Early in 1959, Bennett finally began to seek the "baptism" with the aid of a fellow Episcopal priest and a young couple in the church. In an early morning home prayer meeting, hands

⁹⁶ Ibid., 93. A third major movement is that of *new independent charismatic churches*. It was coined *Third Wave* by C. Peter Wagner. See Lederle, *Theology with Spirit*, 119-123.

⁹⁷ See Dennis J. Bennett, *Nine O'Clock In The Morning* (Southfield, New Jersey: Bridge Publishing, 1970), 51.

were laid on Father Bennett as his friends prayed over him. His “nine o’clock in the morning” experience could be typical of the thousand that have occurred among the clergy in recent years.⁹⁸

In a short time, several members of St. Mark’s parish received the same experience. As word spread among the church members about the pastor’s strange new experience, some members of the vestry began to accuse him of fanaticism. In order to quell false rumors and to answer questions circulating in the congregation, Bennett soon felt it necessary to tell the church about his experience. Thus, on April 3, 1960, he shared his testimony in the three morning services of his church. The reaction in the early morning service was “open and tender,” according to Bennett, but the second service the “lid blew off.” After some members complained, the treasurer of the vestry called on Bennett to resign. Rather than cause disharmony in the congregation, the mild-mannered rector promptly resigned. The turmoil at St. Mark’s caused a sensation in the nation’s press as the story was picked up by the major wire services.

Bennett was then invited to assume the pastorate of St. Luke’s Episcopal Church, a small inner-city parish in Seattle, Washington. Since the church was on the verge of closing anyhow, his friendly new bishop offered support to support him, even in his Pentecostal practices. Free now to promote his experience without official hindrances, Bennett soon converted the church into a center of neo-Pentecostalism in the Pacific

⁹⁸ See Vinson Synan, *The Century of the Holy Spirit: 100 Years of Pentecostal and Charismatic Renewal* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2001), 45; See Vinson Synan, *The Holiness-Pentecostal Tradition: Charismatic Movements in the Twentieth Century* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1971), 55.

Northwest. Instead of closing the church, the bishop saw St. Luke's grow to be the largest parish in the region.⁹⁹

Within a short time, Bennett was ministering to some 2,000 persons a week. Many of these new Pentecostals came from Catholic, Methodist, Presbyterian, Baptist, and Lutheran backgrounds. For over twenty years, an average of twenty persons was baptized in the Spirit each week at the church.

The Charismatic awakening that followed touched nearly every denominational tradition within Protestantism. From the very beginning there was an understanding that the Charismatic movement was not a foreign import or *Fremdkörper* to Christianity, but rather the development of something intrinsic to orthodox teaching---the reclaiming of a fully Trinitarian perspective.¹⁰⁰

By the end of the 1960's Pentecostalism, roundly rejected a half century before by the mainline churches, began triumphal entry into the heart of those very churches. The cycle was complete. The movement was returning with new fire and vigor to find a place of acceptance among its former critics and enemies. The "new wine" of the Spirit was now pouring into the "old bottles" of traditional churches.

HISTORICAL CONCLUSION

Looking at the present in the light of the past provides us the opportunity to see a worldview more encompassing than the limited milieu in which we live. God's active involvement throughout history is a testimony for us today. This understanding empowers us to look past the historical hindrances to the charismata that seemingly

⁹⁹ Bennett, *Nine O'Clock*, 51.

¹⁰⁰ Lederle, *Theology With Spirit*, 93-94.

stifled so many. Though there were periods in time when decline brought on by a variety of variables, threatened the very existence of the Church, God always ignited a spark reigniting her. Despite of varying levels of competence and acceptance with regards to gifts of the Spirit, it is clear that they have never ceased in their operations.

Individuals were constantly being empowered by the Spirit to move the church forward. They have become filled with the Spirit, or empowered by the Spirit, and have experienced the Spirit's supernatural and miraculous ministry. History shows that throughout the biblical narrative up unto the present day, the charismata operating through the gifts of the Spirit, has been a flame lit upon God's children—though weak at times, never extinguished. During the past several decades, God's display of miracles, signs, and wonders has been rapidly increasing in the Western Church. People in this postmodern generation are hungry for the spiritual experience.

They are longing, even unknowingly, for an encounter with God. This affords the church tremendous opportunities to partner with God in the divine missional quest. In response to this, the researcher proposes to develop a discipleship program that does not merely teach a new way to do missional activities, but that empowers its participants—through teaching and experience—to *fully be missional* as they proclaim the gospel in the power of signs, wonders, and miracles in the marketplace.

So in conclusion, history has shown that God sovereignly renews and/or revitalizes the church through periodic revivals. Renewal movements have always been “messy.” However, it was Jonathan Edwards of the First Great Awakening of the 1740’s who cautioned us,

not to be distracted by the external phenomena but rather to look at the transformed lives, growth in love for Jesus, the Scriptures, the

body of Christ, and the lost. These are the true and lasting touchstones for revival.¹⁰¹

The researcher believes that even now, as the topic of church renewal is at a fever pitch and talk of the need for revival still fills the air, change agents are emerging with researcherization from God to move the church forward.

¹⁰¹Lederle, *Theology With Spirit*, 157-158.

CHAPTER THREE

INTEGRATION

Introduction

As the previous chapter established the theoretical foundation of the project, the next step in the sequence of events is to draw a connection between theory and practice. The purpose of this chapter is to first review works from other literary sources that served as an invaluable guide in the understanding and development of this experiment. Then, a discussion that focuses on the relationship between researcher and ministry context, the theological grounding, and the problem addressed by the project, and a proposed solution.

Literature Review

Throughout the research process, the researcher searched through articles, and websites specifically related to the area of skills training and discipleship training within missional church operations. Also, the researcher conducted an exploration of the history of the missional church to discover any historical precedent for the operation of the charismata reported among current missional practices. In the researcher's experience, the overwhelming majority of available missional church training materials is devoid of any intentional incorporation of the charismata's involvement. A small percentage of charismatic training materials are aimed at conducting weekly events; but even those

rarely endorse the application to a missional lifestyle empowered by the chrismata. The sources that best served this research are divided into two categories: secular and theological.

Is the Western Church today operating in the fullness of the biblical model that Jesus set forth? Why is there such a void in conversational church growth? The researcher proposes a Charismata-driven Missional Church discipleship and training program, which will enable participants to learn how to operate in words of knowledge, which will lead to divine or supernatural encounters resulting in more immediate healings and subsequent conversions to Jesus Christ.

The EMC is a new form of *ecclesia* in our day and is playing a major role in the current advancement of God's Kingdom. Therefore, it is believed that in order to reform today's church, especially in the West; a deep structural change is going to have to occur. Realigning with the early church is a significant part of the missional movement that is currently taking place in our time.

This church, the EMC is a church that defines itself, and organizes its life around, its real purpose as an agent of God's mission to the world. In other words, the church's true and authentic organizing principle is mission. It's when the mission of God flows directly through every believer and every community of faith that adheres to Jesus. It is within this area of ministry that the researcher is persuaded lays the answer to true church renewal and reformation.

So as described above, the theological impulse of the EMC differs from the current attractional evangelistic church model. Why is this important? Though, it may seem a small matter, this theological impulse of the way ministry is practiced challenges

to traditional Protestant theological practices. Orthodoxy (belief) is not the only thing affected by incorrect theology; orthopraxis (practice) is as well. Therefore, one must not limit this debate to just that in academia, but to practitioners alike. All of the Triune Godhead is involved and must be factored into the missional conversation.

Especially, the role of the Holy Spirit must become incorporated into missional practice. Those currently producing much of the training material that is available about the EMC have been greatly influenced by traditional Protestant theology. The operation of the charismata within EMC practices is one such area that warrants serious discussion.

The researcher feels that most of the training methods endorsed by the movement mostly focus on relief work or works that deal with the material needs of people as well as social justice issues. However, it is believed that the movement has missed a very essential aspect. That aspect is the miraculous work of the Holy Spirit (Charismata), which was so foundational to the birth, rise and spread of Christianity during the first century. The lack of dependence and incorporation of the Charismata like, for example, words of knowledge into traditional missional practices is striking. It is the researchers' position that for a church to be a true EMC, that church also needs to operate in the Charismata.

Over the past few years we have seen the influx of training materials and writings about the missional church.¹ The EMC movement has seen an increasing amount of popularity among mainline Protestant churches. However, there appears to be a problem with the lack of understanding and incorporation of the Charismata within the current

¹ See researchers such as Michael Slaughter, Mike Bree, Darryl Gruder, Ed Stelzer, Craig Van Gelder, Rudy Rasmus, Michael Frost and Alan Hirsch among others.

missional belief systems and practice, that impact, influence, or shape the destiny and direction of an individual's life and ministry.

Jesus trained and equipped the church to continue his ministry until he returns. He is devoted to the church's growth in Christlikeness and fruit bearing (John 15:1-8) for the glory of God. God is, indeed, glorified as the church proclaims the presence of the kingdom through faith in Jesus, heals the sick, raises the dead, cleanses lepers, and casts out demons (Mt. 10:7, 8). Training followers of Jesus to carry out this assignment is a top priority in heaven.

Examples of Skills Training Models

Described below are various approaches to skills training programs and ministry. These models may have some things in common, but differ in emphasis, focus and approach. Some are more specifically focused on skills training, while others on ministry training through the operation of the charismata. Yet, all recognize the importance of properly training persons to be more effective in their areas of expertise or call. All models contend that skills training are not for a selected few, but for the whole church and/or organization.

Evaluating the impact of TRIZ creativity training: An Organizational Field Study

This model approach was a cross-sectional, longitudinal and multisource evaluation strategy that was used to assess the impact of the training on a sample of design engineers and to make comparisons with non-trainees.² In it, an experimental non-controlled group consisting of 123 participants received training and a controlled group

² R&D Management 42, 4, 2012, 315-326.

consisting of 96 participants that did not receive training was utilized. However, the researcher's study did not have a controlled group.

For the researcher's study, both groups were one in the same; effectively the controlled group was those that had not yet taken the training, whose profile of change was tested at the end of the training. The researcher's study was more focused and relevant because the group that participated in it were identical, which allowed actual change to be measured in the target group as opposed to selecting an extemporaneously controlled group that measuring may not have matched the experimental group.

Another difference in these models lay in the results. Results indicate that participation in the TRIZ training led to short-term improvements in both the creative problem-solving skills and motivation to innovate of engineers, and these were associated with longer-term improvements in their idea suggestion in the workplace. Whereas in his study, improvement in the given focus area was immediate and with definite long-term consequences.

Also, the researcher decided upon a qualitative study as opposed to a quantitative study, which seems to have been the case in this study. The number of participant were uncharacteristically lower for this approach, the research methodology seems to suggest its usage. The qualitative model approach was better suited to serve the researchers' needs and presupposition. As it were, more concrete and relevant data was collected to substantiate the marked improvement of his participants and to validate his training model.

Entrepreneurial Assets and Mindsets: Benefit From University Entrepreneurship Education Investment

This model explored the linkage between ESE (entrepreneurship-specific education) investment, alertness, and risk-taking asset accumulation, and the outcome relating to the intention to become an entrepreneur (henceforth termed an “entrepreneurial mindset”).³ In it, survey information from 189 students from three universities in the Ukraine was hand collected. Hierarchical multiple ordinary least squares regression analysis and slope analysis were used to test presented hypotheses.

Skills training or at least the presentation of a training mechanism was the impetus of this study. Testing the acumen of those surveyed was deciphered and measured over against non-exposure to given material. It appears that a non-controlled group was utilized for the purpose of this study, however the actual training environment was a non-directed one. It is unclear exactly what the content of the surveys included or entailed; however the results from the surveys were positively reported.

Though, this was an area focused study on ESE, it differed from the researcher’s study on various points of interest. The researcher’s study utilized a controlled group that had not yet taken the training, whose profile of change was tested at the end of the training. The researcher’s study was a directed study with fewer participants. Still it was a more focused and relevant group of participants, which allowed actual change to be measured in the target group as opposed to selecting an extemporaneously controlled group that measuring may not have matched the experimental group.

³ Education Training Vol. 55 No. 8/9 (2013), 748-762.

Again, the researcher decided upon a qualitative study as opposed to a quantitative study, which seems to have been the case in this study. As was the case before, the number of participant were uncharacteristically lower for this approach, the research methodology seems to suggest its usage. As it were, more concrete and relevant data was collected to substantiate the marked improvement of his participants and to validate his training model.

Evaluating Training Methods for Transporting Contingency Management to Therapists

This model evaluated the effects of three increasingly intensive training methods on therapist use, knowledge, and implementation adherence of contingency management (CM) with substance abusing adolescents.⁴ Ten public sector substance abuse or mental health provider organizations were randomized to one of three training conditions: workshops and resources (WS+), WS+ and computer assisted training (WS+/CAT), or WS+/CAT and supervisory support (WS+/CAT/SS). Within a variety of conditions, 161 therapists participated in the training experiences, and measures were obtained at baseline and two month intervals for twelve months following workshop participation.

Though, this was an area focused study on ESE, it differed from the researcher's study on various points of interest. The researcher's study utilized a controlled group that had not yet taken the training, whose profile of change was tested at the end of the training. Though this was the approach in this named study, results in the researchers' model were measured directly after the training program, which spanned over an eight week period as opposed to a twelve month period. Also, there were no baseline

⁴ Journal of Substance Abuse Treatment 45 (2013), 466–474.

incorporated in his study, nor was there any periodic intervals utilized to capture sample data.

This study introduced three varying levels and/or degrees of training that participants received. Different participants received different training resources. The researcher's study was a directed study with fewer participants and each participant received the identical degree of training resources. Therefore, no disparity could be assumed and equal reporting could be calculated. Still it was a more focused and relevant group of participants, which allowed actual change to be measured in the target group as opposed to selecting an extemporaneously controlled group that measuring may not have matched the experimental group.

Holistic Healing Evangelism Among the Sonjo Tribe of Tanzania: Power Evangelism Releasing Healing to the Body, Soul, and Spirit to Break the Powers of Darkness Operating Among the Unreached Sonjo Tribe

First, this model won the top award for a Doctorate of Ministry dissertation from United Theological Seminary.⁵ This model approach sought to gain understanding of what is actually happening now among the Sonjo as they form impressions and questions regarding this new faith, which they had entered into. This stated approach was taken as opposed to a study attempting to prove priori assumptions about the benefit of holistic evangelism. Data was gathered from the Sonjo people using thirty interviews, field notes, and twenty-five photographs. The data collected demonstrated that the results support

⁵ Regina Helms, "Holistic Healing Evangelism among the Sonjo Tribe of Tanzania: Power Evangelism Releasing Healing to Body, Soul, and Spirit to Break the Powers of Darkness Operating among the Unreached Sonjo Tribe" (D. Min. dissertation, United Theological Seminary, 2013), vi.

holistic healing evangelism as a significant model to pursue for ministry among the Sonjo.

The researcher agrees with the underlying principle of utilizing power evangelism for the purpose of marketplace. Training others to operate in the power gifts is a nuance being explored by many church leaders and practitioners in this day. However, it doesn't appear that this is what took place in this model. Interviews were conducted with thirty-five participants from a non-controlled setting. The data gathered and/or collected along with data from other resources were thus translated into this study. It does not appear that training actually took place in this study, which differentiates it from the researchers' model.

The researcher aimed to help the participants in his study make sense out of their experience and/or encounter with God as well. However, his was accomplished through training and teaching. Interviews were conducted during and after the training to measure increase and improvement but was not the focal point of his study. This was a significant difference between the two models.

Encounter Discipleship: A Self-Replicating Biblical Discipleship Model For the Postmodern Churchgoer Seeking An Experiential Relationship With God

This study examined the premise that the postmodern churchgoer often has an unmet desire to know God in an experiential way.⁶ An eight-week parachurch spiritual formation discipleship program consisting of teaching and praxis to meet those spiritual

⁶ Jarred Fenlason. *Encounter Discipleship: A Self-Replicating Biblical Discipleship Model For the Postmodern Churchgoer Seeking an Experiential Relationship With God* (D. Min. dissertation, United Theological Seminary, 2013), v.

needs researcher developed and implemented. In it the participants would report an increase in hearing the voice of God, encountering God's presence, gain confidence in ministering to others through words of knowledge and healing, and improve their spiritual well being.

This model was very similar to the researchers' model in emphasis, focus and thrust. The training program did not deviate from the core realities that he himself embraced. Both models utilized a controlled group, which had not yet taken the training, whose profile of change was tested at the end of the training. The major difference can be found in the focus on marketplace ministry and the emphasis on living a lifestyle of supernatural operations.

By The Power of Signs and Wonders: The Role of the Miraculous in Conversion in Canadian-Based Alpha Courses

The purpose of the study was to determine if the probability of conversion increases when the presentation of the gospel message is substantiated by an accompanying miracle, as opposed to a gospel presentation without a miracle.⁷

Participants from thirteen Alpha courses offered in Canada were surveyed and interviewed. The standardized Spiritual Well Being Scale and a personally designed Confidential Spiritual Walk Survey was utilized to measure the change in the participants' relationship with God.

This model was very similar to the researchers' model in emphasis, focus and thrust. The training program did not deviate from the core realities that he himself

⁷ Stephen Elliott. *By The Power of Signs and Wonders: The Role of the Miraculous in Conversion in Canadian-Based Alpha Courses.* (D. Min. dissertation, Asbury Theological Seminary, 2007), v.

embraced. Those were that supernatural events typically break apathy and indifference and make people receptive toward the message of the Christian church. Both models utilized a controlled group. The major difference can be found in the focus on marketplace ministry and the emphasis on living a lifestyle of supernatural operations.

CHAPTER FOUR

METHODOLOGY

The first three chapters of this project are dedicated to identifying the ministry focus, establishing the theoretical foundation and presenting the integration or conjunction between the theoretical and practical content model used in this discipleship research project. This chapter examines methodology: “the analysis of the principles or procedures of inquiry in a particular field.”¹ In general terms, the methodology to be utilized is action research.

In this actions research project, a focus group was assembled, in order to work together and to learn new practices. During this process, the experimental subjects discuss and evaluate their experiences to determine the effectiveness of a healing training model to increase spiritual growth.

This Chapter has four major sections. The first section is the hypothesis. The second section is the research design. The third section deals with the measurement tools, which provides a description of the data collection procedures, analysis and the interpretation of that data. The fourth and final section focuses on the instrumentation, which ultimately deal with the project’s validity.

¹ Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary

Hypothesis

The problem addressed in this study is the lack of dependence and incorporation of the Charismata, namely words of knowledge, and divine encounters into most current missional practices. This is evident among many missional communities. Equipping and encouraging members to live missionally has not been the issue but having an effective healing ministry training program that empowers and propels the members forward to live out this life has.

The hypothesis is that through an intentional and deliberate process of incorporating words of knowledge in the missional church model, the believers will report an increased experience of hearing and discerning God's voice, an increased ability to sense an encounter of God's manifested presence and grow in their level of confidence in ministering to others they encounter in the marketplace. This is a qualitative method research project, which will incorporate some elements of quantitative methods with a phenomenological strategy of inquiry.

The research involved an introductory eight-week experiential training and discipleship program of teaching, personal and group reflection, and praxis. Participants incorporated divine encounters through words of knowledge into their current missional practices. This led each participant to experiencing deeper spiritual development, greater willingness and increased competence in praying for the sick and more testimonies of seeing people healed as a result of their prayers.

Research Design

Introduction

At a general level, research consists of three steps: pose a question; collect data to answer the question and present an answer to the question.² There are several variables that influence one's decision on choosing a particular research approach to implement. However, taking those variables into consideration is a very significant undertaking. There are several advantages and disadvantages to each course of action.

The research method chosen for this project is the qualitative methods approach with a few quantitative elements added to supplement. For more effectiveness, since the participants were be intimately involved in generating information from their experiences throughout the project, this approach was selected. The key idea behind qualitative research is to learn about the problem or issue from participants and to focus the research to obtain the information.³ Because the researcher will be interpreting the data, his worldview comes into play. What is absolute is that everyone has a worldview.

Although philosophical ideas remain largely hidden in research, they still influence the practice of research and need to be identified. The researcher must acknowledge his proclivity towards viewing things through the lens of a social constructionist and pragmatic worldview. Hence, constructionists believe individuals develop subjective meaning of their experiences---meanings directed toward certain

²See John W. Creswell, *Educational Research: Planning, Conducting, and Evaluating Quantitative and Qualitative Research*, 4th ed. (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson/Merrill Prentice Hall, 2009), 3.

³See John W. Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*, 4th ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2009), 10.

objects or things.⁴ The researcher recognizes and acknowledges that the goal of the research is to rely as much as possible on the participants' views of the situation studied.⁵

Pragmatism as a worldview arises out of actions, situations, and consequences rather than antecedent conditions (as in positivism). There is a concern with applications--what works---and solutions to problems.⁶ This researcher was attracted to this view because of the desire to understand the problem and how it might be solved. Moreover, this project gave significant dependence and credence to the participants' observations because of the role in the project they played.

Specific Strategy of Inquiry

The researcher has chosen the qualitative action research method that combines the grounded theory with phenomenological research. Grounded theory is a design of inquiry frequently employed on sociology in which the researcher derives a general, abstract theory of a process, action, or interaction grounded in the views of participants.⁷ In order to gain the best results and as an unbiased an outcome as possible, deciphering and gaining a true understanding of the participants' reflections to the training curriculum, makes this method of the utmost importance.

The participants are the treasure chest of knowledge and information, as it relates to the overall effectiveness of the training curriculum. Therefore, a phenomenological inquiry of design will be used. Phenomenological inquiry of design is a strategy of

⁴John W. Creswell, *Research Design*, 8.

⁵Ibid., 8

⁶ Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*, 10

⁷Ibid., 14.

inquiry in which the researcher identifies the essence of human experiences about phenomenon as described by participants.⁸ This strategy is designed to capture the human experience. At its core, this strategy seeks to garner personal data from the participants as they carried out the project.

Triangulation is an important component in this process as well. Triangulating data sources—a means for seeking convergence across qualitative and quantitative methods.⁹ It is the distinct methods that a researcher will use in order to capture and organize data. For the purpose of this project, the triangulation methods the researcher will use are journaling, interviews/surveys, and testimonies

The Role of the Researcher

In keeping with this type of research, the researcher had a proactive role with the participants from beginning to end. He served as the facilitator of the curriculum and evaluator of the data collected from the training project. The researcher is the Apostolic Leader of the Embassy International, an apostolic training and equipping center. The research site was the New Life Temple Church in Cincinnati, Ohio. The senior pastor also served as a participant during the process.

This set up and structure represents what the researcher believes is the optimization of kingdom impartation and the nature of his assignment. Bringing others into a place of missional living with the Charismata in full operation is that quest. Not only is the researcher utilizing another ministry as the project context but is relying on the

⁸ Creswell, Research Design, 14-15

⁹ Ibid., 14-15.

project outcome to propel him into other opportunities to duplicate it within other contexts.

The researcher's own bias must be clearly stated and understood, in regards to healing ministry and operating in words of knowledge. He is convinced that the incorporation of "words of knowledge" will be successful within a missional context. Though the researcher desired positive results, he resolved to allow the data to speak for itself. In so doing, a clear and reasonably accurate picture is drawn from the data collected. In an effort to protect the identity of the participants, the names of the individuals have been changed and coded.

Measurement

The site, where the healing ministry training was conducted was the New Life Temple Church in Cincinnati, Ohio. However, the sites or locations where the practical implementation occurred varied based on the participant and the leading of the Holy Spirit: the marketplace. In conjunction with the senior pastor of NLTC, members of the church's leadership team were informed of the project and presented with the opportunity to participate. Those who volunteered were expected to commit to going through the eight-week training program. The description of the curriculum appears in Chapter Five (Appendix).

For the purpose of triangulation of data collection, the researcher employed three methods, which consisted of a Pre and Post test, group interviews/testimonies and participant journaling to generate data. During the first class, after a brief introduction, a pre-test (Appendix) was administered to gain an idea of the participants understanding of ministry in general, words of knowledge and healing ministry. The researcher used more

open-ended questions to garner the most data. However some closed-ended questions were included. At the end of the process, a post-test (Appendix), which featured some additional questions sought to reveal what if anything had changed within the lives of the participants.

Secondly, throughout the entire eight-week process, participants were expected to keep a journal. In this, they were to record thoughts, questions, impressions, reflections and any other experience that occurred in conjunction with the training class. Also, the researcher was keeping his own self-directed journal to record what occurred in his life during this process as well.

Thirdly, the participants engaged in-group discussions to express and share how their lives had been transformed, as a result of this training. They reflected on their experiences receiving and giving words of knowledge, healings that occurred, and other ways in which their lives were impacted. The researcher utilized hand-written notes as well as a recording device to capture this data.

Instrumentation

Data Analysis and Interpretation

In order to understand the data that emerged from the project, the researcher studied and analyzed the results from the pre-test and post-test, notes and reflections that surfaced from the participants journals and group discussions. His own experiences were taken into account during this process. The reasoning behind this was to gain an insight

into the reoccurring themes that emerged. These common themes would serve as headings, in which the data would be coded and organized.¹⁰

The major questions that the researcher set out to answer were: did the believers report an increased experience of hearing and discerning God's voice, an increased ability to sense an encounter of God's manifested presence, and did growth in their level of confidence in ministering to others they encounter in the marketplace occur? More importantly, how did learning about words of knowledge impact their willingness to pray for others? And ultimately, how do they feel about healing ministry. Careful scrutiny was given to this process by the researcher as the data was thoroughly analyzed.

The recurring themes that emerged were developed and coded into categories in order to provide a comprehensive understanding of the data. As a result of using a qualitative approach, detailed discussions of the themes and their intertwining appeared in Chapter Five. The results of the study were shared with the group participants and the Context Associates to determine project accuracy and compliance. Overall, there was a consensus of agreement, regarding the researcher's interpretation and conclusions.

Conclusion

The validity and effectiveness of the healing training ministry was verified by using a qualitative action research model. The researcher utilized a triangulated approach as a means to collect and record data from a pre-test and post-test, group interviews/testimonies and participant journals. These were compared to one another and the recurring themes that emerged were then coded and organized in order to provide a

¹⁰ Jackie Baston, "Data Planning and Analysis" (lecture, UTS DMin Intensive, Dayton, OH, August 22, 2013).

comprehensive understanding of the findings, as a result of this study. Chapter Five described in detail that transpired during the implementation of the project.

CHAPTER FIVE

FIELD EXPERIENCE

Introduction

The project was designed to create a model to enable the leadership team from New Life Temple Church (NLTC) to grow in their relationship with God, leading to the launching of a new healing ministry. This experiment tested the hypothesis that an eight-week training and discipleship program focusing on the doctrine of the Priesthood of the believer, gifts of the Holy Spirit, biblical basis for healing, and praying for the sick, equipping participants to grow in their Christian walk, increase their ability to discern the voice of God, grow in confidence to pray for the sick and witness an increased percentage of people healed as a result of their prayers.

The researcher conducted the study with people who were either members of NLTC or members of other churches who had a relationship with NLTC. The Senior Pastor made several announcements to the leadership team of NLTC about a meeting being held three to four weeks before the class was to begin inviting those interested in learning more about words of knowledge and healing ministry to participate in this eight week training and discipleship program.

During the meeting, the senior pastor explained this class was a very important part of the researcher's Doctor of Ministry program and was open for all present. At this time, the researcher provided a simple program overview and a Q & A session. During

the meeting, it was stressed and clearly stated that attendance at each class meeting was mandatory in order for pre-test and post-test validity. This agreed upon format gave the researcher maximum exposure and an opportunity to increase the number of participants.

NLTC has two major facilities adjacently located in the heart of the chief business and residential district in Madisonville, Ohio. One holds the main sanctuary, administrative offices, and the fellowship hall while the other serves as the education building, which was more than conducive for the informal meeting and the upcoming classes to be held.

The participants were active members within the ministry and committed leaders in to the mission of the Lord Jesus Christ. At the present, they do believe in the gifts of the Spirit and that God still works miracles. This was something that was not a new teaching to them, as they have heard many messages on the importance of healing ministry in today's church. All had in-depth worship practices and active prayer lives, as well as, intricately involved in the ministry of the church. None have been extensively involved in healing ministry but most had prayed for the sick at one time or another. Some prayed quite regularly and a couple had even seen people healed when they prayed. The researcher viewed the majority of the participants as a group of mature believers.

The Training Phase

The first four weeks entailed teaching and training on the biblical basis of the Charismata, with an emphasis on words of knowledge. Materials from some of the best-known researchers and practitioners within the healing movement were utilized within the curriculum. This acquainted the participants with some of the most effective methodologies and concepts, from which they were be asked to adhere and implement.

Week One

Twenty participants attended the first Thursday evening class. At the end of the eight-week training program, eighteen participants completed the training. At the first class, the researcher explained in detail the basic requirements of the class. He explained that the attendance was mandatory since the presence of the participants was necessary for the research data to have any significance.

The researcher gave the curriculum¹ to the participants and explained to them the material that would be covered in class and would not be due to time limitations. They were also shown a copy of *The Essential Guide to Healing* by Randy Clark as well as *4 Keys to Hearing God's Voice* by Mark Virkler, and encouraged to purchase both for continued study for their own benefit. The researcher explained that these books would serve as good resources for those truly interested in engaging in healing ministry and praying for the sick. They contain some basics on the kingdom of God; its functions and how praying for the sick connects with it.

The participants received composition books. The researcher explained that the composition books would serve as their journals during the course of training program. They were asked to record their insights, experiences, new learning's, reflections, prayer and healing testimonies and any feedback they had on the training. Participants were also informed that time would be allotted during each class for them to ask questions, make comments and to describe how they experienced God from the previous week.

¹ Randy Clark, *Randy Clark Global Awakening Ministry Training Manual*. (Mechanicsburg, PA: Global Awakening, 2011). The curriculum used for classes 1, 3 and 4 was extracted from the training manual. The course material is briefly discussed in this section, but described in more detail in Appendix B.

The researcher distributed a pre-test to each participant, allowing thirty to forty-five minutes to complete the pre-test. The researcher explained that the pre-test would be compared to a post-test for the purpose of data collection determining the effectiveness of the training. The participants completed the post-test sixty days after the initial class, during the eighth and final week of the training program.

Finally, the researcher presented a lesson on the biblical basis for healing ministry today and the gifts of the Spirit, stressing the importance of healthy and vibrant spiritual lives for those endeavoring to enter into healing ministry and praying for the sick. It is out of an increasingly intimate relationship with God that this ministry flows, resulting in an increased passion for the sick and afflicted. Jesus' compassion for the sick and afflicted, which subsequently led to His ministering to them, was highlighted throughout the scriptures. It was out of the Father's love for humanity that led to the sending Jesus for His overall assignment on earth.

The atonement does not merely provide for forgiveness or salvation, it also provides for physical healing as well. Scripture says, "But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed" (Is. 53:5). Throughout church history, it is on this point that many have focused their attention elsewhere. Protestant theology has the proclivity to place emphasis on forgiveness of sin and salvation at the exclusion of physical healing. During Jesus' first public sermon in Nazareth (Lk. 4:16-27), He describes his ministry by quoting Isaiah 61:1-3. In it, He lays out two significant aspects forming the bedrock of His ministry; one, the Spirit's baptism or anointing He

experienced signifying that He was the Christ and two, what that baptism or anointing Him as the Christ was provided for.

Jesus in turn, trained up his disciples and followers to continue that same ministry, of which they had been witnesses (Mt. 10:5-10; Lk. 10:1-9). After Jesus' death and subsequent resurrection, He commissioned the twelve to make disciples of nations, baptize them, and teach them to do everything Jesus had taught them to do (Mt. 28:18-20). This would include healing and deliverance, which were very significant parts of Jesus' discipleship program. Biblically, there is nothing to suggest that Jesus did not expect healing ministry to continue. To the contrary, Jesus fully expected His healing ministry, would continue throughout the generations. This became evident as Jesus gave His followers the researchery and power needed to accomplish this assignment.

Week Two

In week two, the researcher presented part one of a lesson on the foundations for words of knowledge, which is the core of the training program, stressing that both, week two and week three lessons were the loci of this entire project. Defining Words of knowledge and their operation was the main emphasis this week. This was because of the importance of understanding how words of knowledge and revelatory charisms connect to the glory of God. Those endeavoring to incorporate words of knowledge into their missional practices needed to recognize this aspect.

Jesus said that “the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, He will teach you all things...” (Jn. 14:26) and “that when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative but, whatever He hears, He will speak and He will disclose to you what is to come. He

shall glorify Me, for He shall take of Mine, and shall disclose it to you" (Jn. 16:13-14).

Furthermore, the disciples were instructed to go to Jerusalem and wait until the coming promise of the Father, at which time "they would receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall become My witnesses, both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth" (Acts 1:8).

Jesus provided the researchery and the power, in order for His disciples, followers and for the generations to come, to complete and fulfill the assignment to which they were commissioned. That power came as a result of the Baptism of the Holy Spirit, with the accompanying gifts of the Spirit. Paul records, "Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good. To one there is given through the Spirit a message of wisdom, to another a message (word) of knowledge by means of the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by that one Spirit, to another miraculous powers, to another prophecy, to another distinguishing between spirits, to another speaking in different kinds of tongues, and to still another the interpretation of tongues. All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he distributes them to each one, just as he determines" (1 Cor. 12:7-11, 28).

There are many different gifts of the Spirit, each with its own distinct feature and function, but all given by Holy Spirit for the common good. Though all the gifts are vitally important, for the sake of this project, major focus was placed on the word of knowledge gift. During this class, a word of knowledge was defined words of knowledge as a supernatural revelation of information. It is not something that the person who gets the word knows by his or her own senses, rather, it is supernaturally revealed by Holy Spirit.

The second half of the class focused on a Biblical illustration of the overall process of operating in words of knowledge. That illustration is from the story of blind Bartimaeus, found in the tenth chapter of the gospel of Mark. In this story one sees the process of Jesus instructing one of His disciples to go and inform Bartimaeus to be “be courage for He is calling you” and Bartimaeus responds in faith and is healed (Mk. 10:46-52). This illustration gives a strong portrait of the process the researcher desired to convey. Likewise, the passage provided some principles of the healing process, that the participants should become familiar with as part of this training program.

One of the most significant aspects of this process is faith. Faith moved the disciple to deliver the message to Bartimaeus and faith moved Bartimaeus to toss away his cloak that identified him and move toward Jesus. For this class, faith was spelled R.I.S.K., illustrating the lifestyle of a person desiring to minister in words of knowledge.

Week Three

The researcher presented various aspects of operating in words of knowledge that focused on the seven ways God gives words of knowledge for healing, four ways of hearing God’s voice, and the five-step prayer model for healing. The key dynamic discussed was God communicates to each of His disciples differently. So as a result, learning the different ways He communicates is paramount for increasing the ability to hear and discern His voice and growing in intimacy with Him. He defined intimacy as the positioning of one’s heart before the Lord to receive the deep things from the Father’s heart.

However, receiving from the Father’s heart is only the first step. Transmitting or sharing what was received is the next step, which is then followed by the prayer that is

offered up that brings the healing. There are biblical principles that govern God's people; however, those principles are not to be made into laws that attempt to force God's hand. This adherence to laws must be avoided at all cost within the healing ministry. The researcher made it perfectly and abundantly clear during the class that everything being taught are simply for guidance, and not to be misconstrued as laws to be used to do extraordinary things. However, he also quickly pointed out that these steps and models have been used by some of the most powerful healing ministries of our time and that they have ultimately affected thousands of lives all around the world.

The researcher then asked the participants did any believe that God had possibly given them a word of knowledge that they wanted to share. A few who raised their hands, were acknowledged and given an opportunity to share what it was they had received. The responses from the other participants were overwhelming, as much of what was shared was accurate and pertained to someone present.

The class also covered some practical insights for growing in the use of a word of knowledge for healing. Some of these insights included: a word may come quickly, a word may be vague, tempting you to screen it out or ignore it, to resist the thought that a word you have received is not important, or it is just you, that honesty is the best policy and finally do not let fear rob you and those persons of possible healing. At that moment, the researcher demonstrated how to pray with someone using the five-step prayer model. Then time was allotted for the participants to pray for those who needed healing.

Week Four

In week four, the researcher taught on the doctrine of Impartation and the laying on of hands. There is much to be said in Scripture regarding this doctrine. The researcher

of Hebrews writes, “Therefore let us leave the elementary teachings about Christ and go on to maturity, not laying again the foundation of repentance from acts that lead to death; and of faith in God, instruction about baptisms, the laying on of hands, the resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment. And God permitting, we will do so” (Heb. 6:1-3).

The Bible teaches in both the Old and New Testament the principle of a person receiving an anointing from God. This anointing may be a gift or gifts of the Spirit, a filling of the Holy Spirit (especially for power) or baptism in the Holy Spirit. This idea of impartation or transference of anointing is a strong biblical concept. As we look at biblical examples, we see that this anointing often came through the laying on of hands. “The LORD said to Moses: Bring me seventy of Israel’s elders who are known to you as leaders and officials among the people. Have them come to the tent of meeting, that they may stand there with you. I will come down and speak with you there, and I will take some of the power of the Spirit that is on you and put it on them. They will share the burden of the people with you so that you will not have to carry it alone” (Num. 11: 16-17). This passage doesn’t mention Moses laying his hands on the elders for them to receive, but the concept of a transference of the anointing that is on one man to the others is clearly present.

We see Elisha asking for the Spirit of God to work through him as it did through his teacher. And the people saw that the Spirit of God was indeed working through Elisha in a powerful way (2 Kings 2:1-15). With or without the actual laying on of hands, though, the transference of anointing is clearly a biblically documented, God-initiated event. However, New Testament examples reflect the two ways we can receive power,

gifts, anointing, fillings or baptisms in the Holy Spirit. This is not the only way of receiving impartation from God. Another way is waiting on God through prayer.

The class also covered the three ways that the Doctrine of Laying on of Hands were practiced. Those three usages were the act of ordination, healing and/or blessing, and for impartation. These were elaborated upon in order to establish a clear biblical precedent for what was expected of the participants. That was simply to pray and lay hands on the sick, as opportunity was made available to them. The class culminated with the researcher praying and laying hands on each participant as they were being preparing to go and spend the next four weeks carrying out what had been taught over the last month.

Week Five

Over the next four weeks, the focus shifted to the incorporation of words of knowledge into the daily lives of the participants. This was the first official week of the incorporation of words of knowledge. The researcher arranged for a class conference call so that the participants could ask questions and receive further instructions, give testimonies, and report what they had experienced, the previous week. As Jesus sent out his twelve disciples and later seventy-two of His followers, He waited for their reports from their assignment upon their return (Mt. 10:5-10; Lk. 10:1-9). The training program had now entered into this phase for the participants.

The class conference call went as planned and total excitement filled the air. During the call, the researcher gave several words of knowledge and a few participants acknowledged that those words were for them. Prayer was offered for them and testimonies were given as they were touched by the power of God right then. He provided

further encouragement and support and reassured the participants of his availability if they needed or desired it.

Week Six

The researcher arranged for yet another class conference call so that the participants could ask questions or get further instructions, give testimonies and report what they had experienced the previous week. This call seemed to be a bit more serious as testimonies were being shared about some real touching scenarios that were being encountered and Holy Spirit seemed to be moving in an unusual way.

Week Seven

Though week seven's class was held on-site, the format was still the same as the previous two weeks had been. The participants could ask questions or get further instructions, give testimonies and report what they had experienced the previous week. The researcher simply facilitated the discussion and interjected where it was needed but allowed the participants to set the agenda based upon their needs. The project was nearing the end and researcher perceived that there was a difference in the body language of the participants from week one until week seven. There was a certain confidence that was brimming from them that was not present during that first class. Again, the researcher ended the class with a corporate prayer and blessings

Week Eight

A couple of weeks after the last class, the participants gathered for the final class. Eighteen of the initial twenty participants attended the last Thursday evening class. At the first class, the researcher explained in detail the basic requirements of the class. In week eight, he explained what this class would entail and how it would culminate. Next the

participants were asked to submit their composition books that served as their journals during the course of training program. Then the researcher distributed a post-test to each participant. Thirty to forty-five minutes were given to complete the post-test.

The researcher once again explained that the pre-test previously taken would be compared to that post-test for the purpose of data collection determining the effectiveness of the training. After the post-test, the class moved to café, which was located within the same building as the classroom. The remainder of the class time allowed for sharing of program highlights and testimonials. Food and drinks were served during this time, as the researcher desired to bring finality to the training program within a relaxed atmosphere of fellowship.

As the evening came to a close, several things were done. First, the researcher presented each participant with a five-step prayer model card produced and utilized by Global Awakening. Second, the senior pastor of NLTC say a prayer for me and third, all the participants gathered around me and said prayers of blessings over me, which ended up being a gift to the researcher. The night ended after the blessing. As could be surmised, these experiences with this group from NLTC generated valuable data that is analyzed below.

The Researcher's Role

The researcher served as the primary instrument and source of data collection and it is important to identify his beliefs, assumptions, values, and biases with which he entered this project.² The researcher believes very strongly that the healing ministry is a part of the church's inheritance. This was demonstrated by Jesus and then passed onto to

² Creswell, *Research Design*, 187-189.

his disciples, followers and subsequently the generations to come; that the healing ministry would be a significant part of the church's life. Undoubtedly, God intended for the miraculous to be a normal part of the disciple's life.

Jesus proved that it was possible to teach and train others to pray for the sick and expect to see positive results. That is not to say or imply that everyone that is prayed for will be healed or delivered; nevertheless, it is to say that all can participate in this ministry. As with all other ministries of the church healing ministry has to be practiced, in order to be effective. There are no shortcuts for this ministry as there are no shortcuts for the others.

The researcher contends that healing ministry and the emphasis on miracles was stripped from the church in a very subtle but effective fashion. Not because God had purposefully ended or ceased from them, but because of a systematic change in the church just merely four hundred years after its birth. The shift from being God-focused to organizational structure, politics, theological manipulation and hierarchical control dismantled the healing ministry and the operation of the charismata as a whole. Less emphasis was placed on the *charisms* and more limitations were added on as to who could actually operate in them.

As the focus of the church shifted to the mainstream and many different individuals were incorporated into it, so were their philosophies. This assimilation did not bode well for the supernatural expressions of God. The more the church became central in its practices, the less miracles, signs and wonders were welcomed. Spiritual hunger was replaced by ambition and greed, which sent the church in a tailspin that lasted for several centuries.

However, it is well documented that throughout church history, there were groups that still had expectancy for the supernatural power of God to be revealed. That still hungered for a manifestation of heaven on earth. Within church history, different individuals and groups were reported as having divine encounters and sharing those encounters with others through prayer and healing ministry. This often set them against the church systems and laws that were established at the time. Currently, this is still seen in the current state of the church.

Yet, Holy Spirit has been kindling fires in the hearts of believers down throughout church history and once again is equipping and empowering His followers to demonstrate the power of the kingdom of God through signs and wonders, healing and miracles. Though there was a period of time when the days were at their darkest for the church and everything that it held sacred was challenged and even dispelled, it persevered. Now in this post-modern period, individuals are once again open to the supernatural and authentic experiences. In an age when rationalism has lost some of its grip over the minds of society, there are opportunities aplenty for the church to reemerge displaying the fullness of a comprehensive salvation that applies to the whole person; mind, body and spirit.

The message of the kingdom of God is still adequate for the current times we live in and the supernatural power of its king is still available to all that will open themselves up to it. The world is looking for answers and they are seeking out those who have them. With this being said, the researcher determined to develop data collection strategies to provide the basis for generating information from the experiences of the participants. His findings are examined next.

Data Collection Strategies

Initially, the researcher considered using the mixed-method approach because it was a combination of the qualitative and quantitative methods to coincide with the pre-test and post-test but decided on using the qualitative method. The quantitative method would have generated some numerical data to be interpreted, which would have bolstered the project's qualitative findings. However, after careful study of the necessary skills, expertise and participant numbers needed for this kind of approach, it was decided that he would be better served utilizing just the qualitative method. This strategy afforded the participants the opportunity to share and reflect on what they had experienced and what those experiences meant to them. The researcher chose to use the following: pre-test and post-test, participant journals (which the researcher keep as well), and a focus group.

The ultimate purpose of these three chosen forms of triangulation was to ask open-ended questions that would allow the participants to answer as they saw fit with as much elaboration as was needed. As previously stated, the researcher, in order to record the discussions from the focus groups, also kept a field log and to keep track of all the reflections and reactions, including his own.

The pre-test consisted of fifteen questions. The post-test consisted of twenty-one questions, repeating the same fifteen questions with six new additional questions. Again, with the exception of five, these were open-ended question that allowed the participants room to fully express their thoughts, reflections, and experiences. The researcher gave the pre-test in the first class and the post-test during the final healing ministry class; sixty days after the first class. This would allow the researcher to compare the same questions on both the pre-test and post-test for any shifts or changes that may have occurred in the

answers. Any positive change or increase in experience could possibly signify the training model's efficacy.

The open-ended questions allowed the participants to share how they had been personally affected and directly impacted by the training, what they had learned, how the new learning had positively changed their practices, attitudes, understanding of God's mission and subsequently their own, and effectiveness in healing ministry. The additional five questions provided in the post-test to allowed the participants to reflect on the value of the training. The researcher sought to know if the training was helpful and informative, did it encourage deeper spiritual growth, did healing prayer have a noticeable effect on the one prayed for, and how to improve the training.

In addition to the pre-test and the post-test, participants received journals at the first class session with the instructions to express their thoughts throughout the training, to comment on what they were learning, to describe any spiritual growth taking place, and to record any healing prayer testimonies. The researcher explained that the participants would return the journals during the final class and sixty days after the first healing ministry class.

The focus groups met during the training. The researcher explained at the beginning of each focus group that this was a time to share experiences, testimonies of healing, how to improve the training event, and whatever they felt was pertinent to the study. These methods produced quite a bit of subjective data; it is such data that is the most effective measure of the impact or lack of impact of the training event. The qualitative strategies allow for the construction of a meaningful narrative from the participants' point of view. This information helped to inform the development of future healing ministry training

curriculum and events by TEI. With the strategies explained and in place, the process continues with analysis of the data

Data Analysis

The first step in the analysis was to study the data by reviewing the material several times recording thoughts, impressions, and possible themes. Some data was more in-depth thus more significant than other data and contributed more to the findings. Second, the study of the data focused on the material helpful in answering the key questions the researcher wanted to address.

These questions included the following: Does a healing ministry training program increase the participants' desire to be a part of healing ministry? Does a healing ministry training program increase the participants' opportunities to pray for others? Does a healing ministry training program increase the participants' effectiveness in healing ministry? Did more healings happen during the ministry training program through the participants' prayers than before the training program? Was there a positive change in the participants' spiritual growth and development? Did learning about words of knowledge increase the participants' understanding God's divine intentions to heal?

Third, the researcher looked at the data as a whole and searched for themes that emerged from the information. In general "the intent is to make sense out of text and image data. It involves segmenting and taking apart the data (like peeling back the layers of an onion) as well as putting it back together."³ Emergent codes develop from the repeated themes or issues in the data.⁴ The researcher examined the data for the emerging

³Creswell, *Research Design*, 195-196.

⁴Jackie Baston, "Data Planning. Lecture Handout": UTS Doctor of Ministry Intensive August 2013.

themes that developed through the data analysis of the pre-test and post-test comparison, journals, and focus groups.

Specifically, coding is the process of organizing the data by bracketing chunks (or text or image segments) and writing a word representing a category in the margins.⁵ The codes enabled the researcher to organize the data into meaningful segments for further description and analysis, which is one of the steps in the six-step process of data analysis in qualitative research.

The Codes

As the researcher examined the data from the pre-test and post-test, the entries in the participants' journals, and the comments and reflections from the focus group discussions he identified the emergence of four major themes and four sub-themes. The major themes are labeled increased awareness/sensitivity (IA/S), increased boldness/confidence (IB/C), testimony (T), and training efficacy (TE).

Initially, the researcher noticed the immediate emergence of the increased awareness/sensitivity from the pre-test and post-test as well as being consistently shared among the participants during the focus group discussions. This acknowledges an increased awareness or sensitivity to hearing God's voice as well as the manifestation of God's presence around them.

Increased boldness/confidence includes the positive changes to answers in the post-test, journals and focus groups discussions. This specifically addressed the attitude towards willingly stepping out and making oneself available to be used by God to

⁵Creswell, *Research Design*, 197-198.

advance His kingdom through healing and deliverance. For sake of this course, faith was defined as RISK, and was heralded throughout the data collection sources.

Third, the major category labeled testimony included information from the participants' experience of (1) receiving words of knowledge/hearing God's voice, (2) praying for the sick and (3) any other shifts in spiritual growth and development that occurred during this training, as indicated from the post-test, journals and focus group. There are examples of receiving words of knowledge, praying for the sick and having visions and dreams. Many of the testimonies recorded in this section provide some very detailed data describing the various aspects and experiences of prayer ministry.

Finally, Training efficacy details the responses to the post-test questions, journals entries and testimonies shared in the focus groups that signified overall improvements in the lives of the participants.

The four sub-themes were practical experience, advocacy, identity, and intimacy. Being able to be instructed and immediately apply the material speaks to the very nature of true biblical discipleship. Jesus stated that his followers were to go and teach others to do what he did. Advocacy means that support grew for having healing ministries within the Church and this reverberated throughout the focus group discussions. That Jesus commissions his disciples and followers to continue his healing ministry today was passionately supported. Identity refers to who the believer is in the context of continuing the healing ministry of Jesus.

The basis of ministry is our identity in Christ as sons and daughters of God, researcherized to minister healing in his name. This is the very foundation, which undergirds and informs every element of the Christian life including healing ministry. A

greater joy is learning how to work with God in bringing healing to others. This can only be made possible through a personal growing relationship with the Triune God, which overtly impacted the training program. The themes and sub-themes are often overlapping and interconnected. Therefore, the attempt to separate them completely is somewhat artificial. However, the researcher makes the attempt to give clarity to the data analysis.

The researcher examined each major theme or finding from each data source: the pre-test and post-test comparison, participants' journals, and focus group discussions to provide for the triangulation of the data. The sub-themes are included as they arose from the data. The researcher recorded and described the data in narrative form and supplied his comments.

The Findings

Increased Awareness/Sensitivity

In this section, the researcher examined the emergence of an increased awareness/sensitivity. Having analyzed the data from the pre-test and post-test, the journals, and the focus group discussions, the researcher noticed an increased awareness/sensitivity theme as part of his findings. This finding and/or code were absolutely paramount to the intended purpose of this ministry training program. Being aware of and sensitive to the voice and nearness of God is what fuels any attempt at healing ministry. The hypothesis tested by the researcher was that an intentional and deliberate process of incorporating words of knowledge would lead to an increase of hearing and discerning God's voice as well in sensing God's manifested presence.

The Pre-test/Post-test

By examining the post-test, the researcher was able to glean at the very least a partial difference between the participants' spiritual posture before the training program and after the training program. This became apparent in question seventeen, nineteen and twenty. The questions were "Have you grown spiritually as a result of the healing ministry class? How?" "How has praying for the sick affected your spiritual development" and "What aspect of the healing ministry training has had the greatest impact on you (Appendix B)?" The questions were open-ended and designed to capture the authentic participants responses.

There was no predetermined list of answers to choose from provided nor was any direction given as to how the participants should respond, which allowed for the possibility of a wide range of responses. Out of fifty-four possible participant responses, there were at least eighteen (33%) that directly reported and/or indicated an increase in their level of awareness/sensitivity compared to where their level of awareness/sensitivity was prior to the training program. Most of the participants didn't have a lot of experience praying for the sick so similar responses on the pre-test and post-test was surprising but welcomed.

This data allowed the researcher to conclude that a certain degree of progression had indeed occurred. This was true of each emergent code and/or finding. Obviously, there were other responses to those given questions, which provided significant insight. However, very few emerged with the consistency and gravity, though favorable, necessary to become a major finding and/or code as this one.

Participant 2 captures the feelings of the majority by stating, "It has made me more sensitive in seeking God concerning root issues that can lead to sickness so my request can be more specific in what areas to pray about." Question nineteen asked how has praying for the sick affected your spiritual development. Participant 3 and the context associate comments,

It has caused me to seek God more, in order to hear about a person's needs and request so that I can pray more accurately on their situation.

Participant 22 expressed sentiments this way, "I am more aware that God wants his people whole; body, soul and spirit. Spiritually, I want God to be glorified and His Church and people healthy." Participant 25 adds, "I have tuned my ear to the voice of God and have become more sensitive, as a result of this healing ministry class."

Participant 13 agrees and adds, "I am more sensitive to the Holy Spirit promptings and my prayer and study time is increasing. When it comes to healing ministry, these comments reflect the overall posture of the believer. Participant 18 sums it up this way, "I notice things about people where as before I never stopped and paid attention to details."

This was a wonderful and powerful insight. The kingdom of God is constantly moving and the followers of Jesus must become more aware of this reality.

Journals

Eighteen of twenty participants returned journals to the researcher sixty days after the first of the training class. In the journals, the participants documented their new learning, reflections, thoughts, new insights, and testimonies of receiving words of knowledge and healing prayer.

Participant 1 mentioned, “two weeks before this class I said I wanted to look at my job as a ministry. So now as I’m taking this class I want more. I’ve prayed to God saying I want to be more like Christ and my awareness of wanting to be used by God has been deepened.”

Participant 6 recalled how an incident unfolded as a result of becoming more aware/sensitive to God’s voice and presence, “during our confirmation service God gave me a word of knowledge about one of the students. God said one word, grandson. When I said this to the student, she asked which one? I said God just said grandson and she began to cry and said that she had really been concerned about the one that was sixteen. He lost his mother when he was young and now he is withdrawing from the family. We prayed and believed that God would heal and restore the relationship.”

Participant 29 mentioned,

I had a dream one night...I shared the dream with another believer and he said that dream was for him because he was trying to keep up with other people and that he wanted things to happen in his life right now. Therefore, he was rushing to make it happen, so he said that dream spoke to him about being patient and doing what he needs to do and wait on God to open doors for him. We were both blessed!

Participant 12 laments, “my prayer is that I will be more sensitive, willing and looking for an opportunity for God to use me in the area of “words of knowledge” because I blew it.’

Participant 15 exclaims,

In reflection of the last couple of weeks I’m more aware that I’m in the right place. There is a cry and urgency in the atmosphere for the people of God to rise up and demonstrate His power. We need to move on purpose with an assignment! God may send us to the grocery store not only to pick up fruit, eggs and butter but He may be sending us on an assignment to heal, pray and cast out. It is

becoming clearer to me that we can't have faith without works or demonstration.

Participant 2 remarked, "OMG, there is such an energy change within my spirit tonight. Lord I am so glad that I attended the class for tonight. I must admit my reluctance in coming completely changed when I focused on the teaching more".

Participant 30 shares, "I've never seen myself as being gifted or exceptionally spiritual. I've never had a deep relationship with God; it's always been mostly surface. This class has awakened something in me to go deeper."

Participant 23 mentioned, "I am always praying that I flow with the Holy Spirit in a service. Being sensitive to God in the marketplace is so important in reaching people for God and ministering to them. I am praying that God will increase my awareness of the Holy Spirit speaking to me. This is truly a walk of faith. Hearing and awareness go together. I am learning that God giving me a word or a sentence is just as important as those who speak so much more."

Participant 22 concluded, "I believe everyone, including myself are becoming more discerning to the Holy Spirit." This comment or a variation of it was the sentiment of the participants' response to going through the training program. It is striking how many expressed some measure of increased awareness to the Holy Spirit's presence and movement. This can also be seen in the sub-themes that emerged from the data.

Focus Group

In the focus groups, participants were encouraged to share what they valued most about the training program, healing testimonies, ideas about improvement of the training,

and anything else they wanted to share. The researcher recorded the statements and placed them in his field journal.

Participant 10 shared, "I have noticed that I'm more sensitive to the Holy Spirit; not just thinking the thoughts, pains, unction's and dreams are just the way I feel but not to take them so lightly."

Participant 15 shared, "Since the class has started I have noticed a risen awareness for when God wants to move through me for someone else. There seems to be a heightened sensitivity to the needs of others around me".

Participant 29 mentioned,

I noticed that I have been more mindful of God speaking to me. When I sense things about people or hear that voice telling me something about someone, I now start praying and asking God questions about what I am hearing from Him. Now, I often think how important my study time with God is because I want everything I do to line up with His Word!

Participant 12 observed, "My expectation of God using me has increase. I am expecting opportunities for God to use me in the area of words of knowledge. I try to listen more when I talk with people to see if God will use me. I'm a talker, so listening is a good thing for me."

Participant 2 said, I am trying to be more cognizant of the leading of the Holy Spirit while I'm out and about. Being able to minister in the marketplace is a hallmark of the missional church. Participant 23 concluded, "Awareness is the word that comes to my mind about this class."

Increased Boldness/Confidence

The Pre-test/Post-test

Increased boldness/confidence specifically addressed the attitude towards willingly stepping out and making oneself available to be used by God to advance His kingdom through healing and deliverance. As previously stated, this became apparent in question seventeen, nineteen and twenty. The questions were “Have you grown spiritually as a result of the healing ministry class? How?” “How has praying for the sick affected your spiritual development” and “What aspect of the healing ministry training has had the greatest impact on you (Appendix B)?” The questions were open-ended and designed to capture the authentic participants’ responses.

Again, there was no predetermined list of answers to choose from provided nor was any direction given as to how the participants should respond, which allowed for the possibility of a wide range of responses. Out of fifty-four possible participant responses, there were at least twenty-two (41%) that directly reported and/or indicated an increase in their level of boldness/confidence compared to where their level of boldness/confidence was prior to the training program. This data allowed the researcher to conclude that a certain degree of progression had indeed occurred.

Participant 15 says, “I feel empowered to share this class with others and I have embraced a newfound boldness. I believe this has taken me to another dimension.” Participant 8 echoed that by saying, “I have learned the importance of R.I.S.K. and adopted the attitude I can’t make an impression unless I take a R.I.S.K. for the glory of God.”

Participant 17 mentioned, “my boldness has been increased and I been noticing how I want to talk to as many people as I can now. It’s all about saving souls and people are hurting and I want to be used by God to be a blessing.”

Participant 2 states, “My faith has increased to take R.I.S.K., pray more to God that I can do all things through Christ which strengthens me. It has helped me to become bolder in knowing that when I pray, God’s word will back me up.” Participant 30 states, “It’s allowed me to grow and become confident in praying for others and speak what God has given to those in need.” Participant 24 and participant 10 both agreed, “I have more confidence than before.”

Journals

The journals record some very authentic and inspiring reflections as a result of this training program, which indicate some degree of spiritual growth. They represent ripples of change that seemed to be flowing through the experiences captured in them.

Participant 8 captures the vulnerability that is required in the growth process by stating,

while praying I asked God to give me the spirit of boldness. I have to say I believe I missed an opportunity to pray for someone most recently while I was at work. I was convicted when I got home so called the co-worker and prayed for them by phone. Not as effective! Then later adds, “my spirit doesn’t settle knowing there is so much to do in the kingdom, so little time to do it and so many capable of doing that just won’t do.

This increase in spiritual boldness even extended to the professional clergy.

Participant 30 shared,

Since becoming a minister, I’ve been moved out of my comfort zone of being in the background. I’m not use to being called upon to pray for someone or with someone so the first time I was called down to help on the prayer line I was nervous but as I relaxed and

started praying the Spirit of God started flowing through me and the words God put into me to say to the person I was praying with. It was scary, moving, powerful but also humbling.

Participant 1 stated, I see myself praying more, getting up early in the morning and I'm looking for God to use me." And participant 2 mentioned, "there was a peace within me for stepping out on faith to say what God wanted so He could do more within our meeting that evening. Praise God for the confidence to do this beyond the feelings that were racing inside of me at the time."

Participant 23 said, "I do not consider myself very gifted when it comes to spiritual gifts. I feel this class helped me have more confidence in that area." Participant 17 said, "I just really feel much bolder in talking to and praying for people than I've ever felt before. That's all stirring in my spirit."

Focus Groups

The focus groups discussions were wide ranging designed to capture the reflections, thoughts and experiences. Boldness and confidence in praying for the sick in the marketplace come through listening and recognizing the voice of the Hoy Spirit. This can't be overemphasized. There is no substitute for the practice in healing ministry.

Participant 8 states, "I have developed a boldness for God moving in my life and through me. It's almost like I anticipate Him to use as much as He desires and that is actually very often." Participant 30 admits, "the class has given me confidence to speak the things of God to others."

Testimony

Testimonies focus on any increase in spiritual progress, shifts in ministry activities or significant experiences the participant's had during the training. The

researcher did not put any stipulations and/or offer any prerequisites on what was considered a testimony. Therefore, what is recorded emerged from the participants themselves and what was permeating their thoughts and reflections.

Pre-test/Post-test

The participants' testimonies recorded on the post-test represent self-described movement and interaction with Holy Spirit that made favorable impressions. They focus on the participants' efforts to pray for others as a result of hearing God's voice and recognizing the promptings of the Holy Spirit. For those that didn't see an increase in actually praying for the sick, other nuances measurable were taken into consideration.

Participant 22 states, "I have an increased desire to be used by God on my job and in other places. Participant 13 agrees, "I love to see people healed and delivered and this is one of my greatest passions. This class has increased my passion." Participant 25 shared, "I've been impacted by just being on purpose and putting myself in a position to used."

Journals

There were many testimonies recorded in the journals. Because of their subjective nature, the researcher didn't attempt to measure or evaluate them based on actual miracles or tangibles evidence. However, these were selected based upon some degree of spiritual manifestation.

Participant 13 shared this personal testimony of healing,

I had a dream about my friend, she was at a desk writing and I touched her arm and it was hot and swollen; her wrist as well. The next day I spoke to her over the phone and told her about the dream. I told her that God cares for her and wants to take care of her. She later admitted that she did have a swollen limb; that it wasn't her arm but her leg and ankle. I prayed for her on the phone, while praying I asked her did she feel any sensations in her leg (I learned this from class last night). She said that she did. I continue to pray for her and commanded the swelling to leave. She began to cry and thanked me for helping.

Another participant experienced similar involvement in a healing event.

Participant 15 mentioned,

I went down to the lunchroom where I work and one of the lunch ladies was sitting across the room. Her foot caught my eye. So I went to her and asked her how she doing, she said that she was doing well. I asked her how her foot was doing and she said that it was hurting her. She had previously broken her ankle and now her cast was off and had been off for some months. While she was talking I heard the words, nerve endings. So I asked her to describe her pain, and she said that the pain started in her foot and would radiate up her leg to her knee, which was confirmation to what I heard and gave me the release to move forward with prayer. So the strategy was to speak to her pain. I then just looked her in her eyes and prayed right in the middle of our school kitchen. It came out as casual conversation not like how we would usually pray. I wanted to lay hands on her foot but I had to resist because I was directed to keep it casual. The next morning when I saw her, I asked her how her foot was and she said she proclaimed victory in Jesus name! We both agreed by saying, in Jesus' name.

In addition to those noted above, yet another participant was involved in a healing event.

Participant 29 mentioned this occurrence,

I was in bed one night and around two o'clock in the morning I felt a great pain in my left knee. It was throbbing and felt like it was swelling. When I mentioned this in class and another participant said one of the brothers in our church called him and told him that he has pain in his knee really bad. One Sunday I went to this brother and told him what happened to me and that I believe that because of my pain that God wanted me to pray for him. Some

weeks later he came back to me and told me that the pain was completely gone in his knee and that God healed him.

Focus Groups

The focus group discussions were opportunities for the group to share their thoughts, reflections and experiences, as they believed it to be a divine encounter or a supernatural event.

Participant 23 stated this,

That during our first conference call focus group discussion that we had a few weeks ago, the researcher gave several words of knowledge; one in particular dealing with a pain in a left shoulder. Remember I acknowledged that I was one of the individuals with pain in my shoulder and he prayed for us. Well, last Sunday during worship I just began to raise both my arms and noticed that I could. I haven't been able to do this in a long time because of the pain and at that point I realized that I was healed! The first thing that I thought about was the researcher's prayer and that I couldn't wait to share this with him and the class. God is awesome!

Another participant shared a similar experience.

Participant 8 shared,

At first I was under the mindset that it may not be God speaking to me then I would get a thought or feeling about something. After the first class, it was confirmation that God is speaking to us every day; it's just a matter of whether we want to tune into the same network, take what is given and proceed with the instructions. I now think is it well worth the RISK. Now, I've gained a whole new perspective. It's a new way of thinking and I love.

Participant 2 shared, "I needed God and He heard my cry. This class has blessed me in a way that is so much deeper. I told God that I don't want to ever loose this place in Him or be religious in things that I do ever again. It was an awakening in my life in areas that I needed to change and also to move like I always dreamed."

Participant 13 announced,

I am more confident in meeting people and having a conversation with them about Christ. When you rely on the Holy Spirit and all him to direct your path, it is amazing how he will draw people to you. I believe there has been opportunities all along, but didn't have the confidence to know what to say or how to say it. But now, I don't think about my confidence is not in my flesh, but in the Holy Spirit and there is a natural flow of the oil representation of the Holy Spirit that is flowing from me to others. It is awesome! Then continued by stating, there is an increase in my worship and prayer life.

Participant 6 spoke of a shift occurring in his life, "I am searching myself on every encounter, inquiring as whether God is speaking to me about the person I have just met. My belief that I can hear God in this new way is greatly improving. I am taking more R.I.S.K."

Participant 11 exclaimed, "I am excited to be used by God to expose people to the power of the Kingdom. I have told people about this class and my experience."

Participant 10 stated, "I was impacted because I recognize that my thoughts are not just mine all the time and to take notice of what I'm thinking about and really pray and seek God because it's for someone else." Participant 6 concludes, "What I received was life changing!"

Participant 15 made the interesting point, "I have witnessed people delivered from things that kept them sick, mentally oppressed, or otherwise trapped. I'd like for this gift to grow in my day to day interactions-especially for non-believers."

Participant 12 shared,

Class was eye opening and exciting. I was glad to hear testimonies and knew that some shared like experiences and others shared info that I could learn from. Another participant shared about feeling pain and receiving a word of knowledge. When he sat down, I felt a pain in my side a few times. I knew it was God. I tried to figure out who it could be for. When I got home my daughter said her

stomach was hurting right where I felt the pain in my stomach/side. I prayed for God to heal her and she did say that she felt better. When I prayed for her I told her what I was learning in class and that this was God, not mom.

Many of the participants had similar experiences with family members and demonstrated very competent responses and explanations to what was transpiring through them. The idea that was captured during the training was that no one was safe or off limits to the Holy Spirit's leading and desire to touch. Much of the prayer activity that took place during the training happened within this context. It signified a level of awareness that learning to discern the voice and presence of God has tremendous impact upon those closest to us by default. The needs of others become clearer when individuals avail themselves to this type of ministry.

Training Efficacy

Scattered throughout the data were references to the impact of the training program and shifts that happened as a result. These were taken into consideration, in order to help determine the program's effectiveness and the possibility of it being reproducible. This code/theme signified overall improvements in the lives of the participants.

The Pre-test/Post-test

By examining the post-test, the researcher was able to glean the improvement between the participants' prayer activity before the training program and after the training program. This became apparent in question nine. The question was "How many times in the last 30 days have you prayed for the sick with the laying on of hands? (Appendix B)?"

Participant 8 stated, "The added blessing was the ability to practice what was learned in class and that each minister has their own way of implementation and being keen to the Spirit is the ultimate goal. I loved the entire class" Participant 3 echoes this, "the greatest impact has been in the doing! I enjoyed putting into practice what I learned."

Participant 12 stated, "I enjoyed the entire process; the teaching, sharing/fellowship and the activation." Participant 15 mentioned, "Since taking the class, praying for the sick is happening almost weekly."

Eleven participants demonstrated an increase in their prayer activity and number of times they prayed for someone over the course of the training program when the pre-test and post-test was compared. Four participants didn't see any increase in their prayer activity but remained active in their regular times of prayer. Three reported a decline in their prayer activity for various reasons.

Journals

Within the journals are chronicled autobiographical stories; reflections and thoughts that provided snap shots of circumstances and situations that influenced the participants in a measurable way. These are documented accounts of the Holy Spirit's movement through the lives of the participants.

Focus Group

As has been the pattern, participant 13 shared,

The gift of knowledge has increased. Although I have in the past used this gift more in our church services, there has been an increase in the gift when witnessing outside the doors of the church to reach unbelievers....I am hopeful that this training will help all of our leaders grow in the area of ministering at the alter, ministering in the marketplace and more importantly deepen our

relationship with the Lord and allowing the Holy Spirit to move in our midst. I have already noticed a change in the way we are ministering as teams during services.

Participant 10 punctuates this by admitting, “I have told someone who is in leadership how the class has helped me and I needed this 4 years ago after being called into the ministry.” Participant 15 mentioned,

I walked away from our last conference call with this strategy and revelation-Don’t Think, Yield! In order for words of knowledge to work we must not only be alert to when God wants to move, but we must not over think it. This indicates that we will be required to train our spirit to hear God and our flesh to obey (yield) to Him. I have noticed that these moments are very tender because each encounter must be handled gently and with care. We need to give ourselves (our own intellect and agendas) away so that God’s glory can pass through us. I am seeing that the key to progress is to first adopt a new mindset concerning our kingdom identity.

Another participant expressed something similar sentiments. Participant 8 stated,

I’m one of those that will work behind the scenes very well. I don’t need to be out front, giving a word, saving the folks...I enjoyed preparing the way, but not the one to actually execute the task. NOW, I’ve gained a whole new perspective. I’m here to do it all, set the atmosphere for God to speak and be the vehicle for the word. I just came to that realization after taking the class...I used to think one could not possibly hear God speak to them about everything, well I have to eat my words, because I’m realizing if we give Him the opportunity, He will respond to EVERYTHING we ask Him to. I’m loving it!

Participant 23 concludes, “I take my time in ministering so that I can hear from God.”

This was a major change and the consequences that that the researcher has seen have been tremendous and a huge blessing.

Outcomes

The researcher approached the data with the following questions: (1) did the healing ministry training program result in increased effectiveness in healing ministry?

(2) Was there an increase in the prayer activity after the training than before? (3) Was there any increase in the participants' spiritual growth? (4) Was there an increased ability to hear the voice of God and discern His manifested presence? (5) Was there an increase in boldness/confidence to minister to others?

From the data collected, it seems as though there were signs that pointed to the affirmative, in regards to these questions. A part of the inheritance that belongs to the follower of Jesus is healing ministry. This ministry is not just for the spiritually elite or an exclusive group of super Christians. Based on the doctrine of the Priesthood of the believer and most importantly, the mission committed on to the church, "everybody gets to play."

Primitivism (term that refers to the Early church) was characterized as a lay movement, empowered by Holy Spirit through the operation of the gifts of the Spirit. These empowered followers of Jesus carried on His healing and deliverance ministry as they had been commissioned to do. Each member of Christ' body prepared and expected to function as a minister; a servant to the world. By the third and certainly by the fourth century this had changed. The church was moved from the margins to the center of society and caused a major shift in thrust and emphasis.

No longer was this Jesus movement in the hands of the people but now it belonged to the State and its designated caretakers. The signs and wonders, healing and miracles that once represented the norm became the exception; even outlawed eventually. Relegating the powerful lifestyle of the kingdom of God and all its earthly demonstrations to second-class citizenship only practiced by a select few. Sending the church into a downward spiral that it has yet to fully recover from.

However, God has visited His people with periodic outpourings of His Spirit that has kept the Church from extinction and provided injections of energy and life to keep it moving forward. These injections became embodied in individuals that were used by God to call attention to misused and often-abused nuances of God's purpose and design for His Church. Most importantly, bringing the work of the kingdom back to the masses and empowering many to reclaim a lost inheritance, an inheritance of healing ministry.

The first objective for this healing ministry training program was teaching and training for marketplace ministry. These could be categorized or labeled as the preferred delivery systems. However, in addition to those, the intrinsic objectives the researcher hoped to observe was an increased ability to hear and discern the voice and presence of God as well as increased prayer activity. The training consisted of weekly classroom instruction and media presentations on the topic of healing, hearing the voice of God and praying techniques.

The second objective was teaching the 5-step prayer model often utilized in marketplace ministry. The researcher taught and then showed a video presentation of Global Awakenings' Randy Clark teaching and demonstrating this prayer model during a class meeting. Thousands of believers have been taught and effectively employed this model of praying for the sick all around the world. Exercises were then conducted during class to demonstrate the model.

The third objective was activation for marketplace ministry. First, the researcher led the participants in exercises that concentrated on hearing the voice of God as well as receiving and sharing words of knowledge. Secondly, he accompanied by the context associate conducted activation sessions with the laying on of hands. These sessions were

conducted at the end of the teaching and training classes with a twofold purpose, first, to demonstrate the biblical doctrine of the Laying on hands and second in order to stir up and impart the gifts of the Spirit.

The fourth objective was to create and foster a kingdom culture, where the gifts of the Spirit flow freely, specifically the gift of word of knowledge. The researcher used the Team Ministry Training Manual from Global Awakening and Mark Virkler's book, *4 Keys to Hearing the Voice of God* to teach sessions on receiving words of knowledge. There was major emphasis placed on this *charism* because of the significant role that it plays within healing ministry.

The fifth objective was to observe an increased understanding of the gift of words of knowledge before the training and after the training as illustrated in question twelve on the pre-test and post-test answers (Appendix 2). As this was demonstrated, the researcher gauged the effectiveness of the core aspect of the training program.

CHAPTER 6

REFLECTIONS, SUMMARY, AND CONCLUSION

Reflections

One of the most neglected ignored and unappreciated doctrines of the church is the doctrine of the Priesthood of the believer. It was the teaching that undergirded much of the Protestant Reformation and fueled a movement back towards the reclaiming of total access to God and years later the restored operation of His gifts. Despite all of the attempts of the enemy throughout history to restrict and restrain God's movements from within and without the church, evidence continues to prove that "God is not dead!" God is alive and well.

Jesus' ministry was shaped by, "His doing what He saw the Father doing." This reality informed and influenced everything that Jesus did. This in essence was the true nature of discipleship training in the NT. Emulating what the master taught and did. However, traditional discipleship training has focused on facts or doctrine about Christianity and defined faith as believing the right list of facts.¹ Recapturing the biblical form of discipleship is the aim of this project.

One of the major components of the biblical form of discipleship included healing ministry. This was and is a part of the inheritance of the church. The disciples of the

¹ Ruthven, What's Wrong with Protestant Theology: Tradition vs. Biblical Emphasis (Tulsa, OK: Word and Spirit Press, 2013), 24.

early church performed the miracles that Jesus did: drove out demons, healed all kinds of sickness and raised the dead. They did the greater works; working and performing signs and wonders and that legacy was passed on to subsequent generations.

The purpose of signs and wonders was not for church enjoyment or personal indulgence. As with Jesus, these phenomena happened in the marketplace, in evangelism and mission. The word mission is not a biblical term. It comes from the Latin “missio”, which means the same as the Greek “*apostello*”, to be sent to advance God’s kingdom. Jesus sent out the twelve disciples on one occasion and subsequently seventy-two other \ disciples on another to do what he had been doing; heal the sick, cast out demons and raise the dead. This transfer of kingdom ministry did not stop with those two groups of disciples but multiplied as recorded in the Book of Acts.

The early church believed and practiced the priesthood of all believers; Jesus being our High Priest. However, by the fourth century, many of the organic freedoms of the every believer-a-minister ministry had been hijacked and confiscated by ordained priests and Bishops. Professional ministry led to the disempowerment of the ordinary church member, creating a clergy-laity divide. Healing ministry suffered at the hands of the professional clergy. However, history has demonstrated that there have been many turning points that have seen the restoration of healing ministry recurring.

Yet, the question still remains: is the Western Church today operating in the fullness of the biblical model that Jesus set forth? Why is there such a void in conversational church growth? The researcher proposes a Charismata-driven Missional Church discipleship and training program, which will enable participants to learn how to

operate in words of knowledge. This will lead to divine or supernatural encounters resulting in more immediate healings, revealing the presence of God Himself, with consequent conversions to Jesus Christ.

Summary

The purpose of the project through an intentional and deliberate process of incorporating words of knowledge in the missional church model, the participants will report an increased experience of hearing and discerning God's voice. They will sense an encounter of God's manifested presence and grow in their level of confidence in ministering to others they encounter in the marketplace. This will also lead to more conversions, healings and deliverance. The researcher contended that through the healing ministry training program participants would grow deeper spiritually, develop a greater willingness and ability to pray for the sick, and see an increase in the percentage of people healed.

The researcher chose a qualitative design approach for the experiment since it allowed him to gather data from the participants' reports of their understanding of healing ministry and their experiences. He wanted to understand the subjective meanings the participants gave to their learning and their practices of praying for the sick. He also wanted to develop a practical model for healing ministry that would increase the number of people healed through the healing ministry of the group members. The project gave the researcher the opportunity to begin the process of building a healing ministry training program useful in training disciples in the months and years to come.

The qualitative strategy combined grounded theory with elements of phenomenological research. The perspectives of the participants served as the ground for the theory resulting from the study. Praying for the sick was the phenomenon examined through participant descriptions. The study utilized multiple stages of data collection and the emergent themes were inspected for possible relationships between themes and the overall meaning of the data²

The comparison of a pre-test and a post-test, participant journals, and focus groups served to accomplish the process of methodological triangulation. The researcher constructed the data collection procedures using primarily open-ended questions that allowed the participants the greatest freedom to express their own particular impressions and experiences. As the themes emerged from the data, they were coded to demonstrate the relationship observed by the researcher.

The researcher was the training program instructor and the evaluator of the data. He oversees an Apostolic training center and is committed to healing ministry. His theology is shaped by and/or from his own divine encounter that he experienced many years ago and subsequent encounters that have been experienced. He has witnessed and observed a significant level of growth in himself by praying for the sick and training others to do likewise. He admits unashamedly that his quest is to help train up a missional/apostolic people operating charismata, specifically in words of knowledge.

² Creswell, *Research Design*, 13.

Church leaders from NLTC were invited by their senior pastor to attend an eight-week healing ministry training program at NLTC. The class began with twenty people and finished with eighteen. The participants were trained to pray for the sick during marketplace encounters two months. They recorded their healing ministry experiences in their journals and discussed them in the focus groups.

The researcher approached the data with the following questions: (1) did the healing ministry training program result in increased effectiveness in healing ministry? (2) Was there an increase in the prayer activity after the training than before? (3) Was there any increase in the participants' spiritual growth? (4) Was there an increased ability to hear the voice of God and discern His manifested presence? (5) Was there an increase in boldness/confidence to minister to others?

The eight-week training program took place at the New Life Temple Church (NLTC) located in Madisonville (Cincinnati) Ohio. The participants were active members within the ministry and committed leaders in to the mission of the Lord Jesus Christ. At the present, they do believe in the gifts of the Spirit and that God still works miracles. This was something that was not a new teaching to them, as they have heard many messages on the importance of healing ministry in today's church. All had in-depth worship practices and active prayer lives, as well as, intricately involved in the ministry of the church. None have been extensively involved in healing ministry but most had prayed for the sick at one time or another. Some prayed quite regularly and a couple had even seen people healed when they prayed. The researcher viewed the majority of the participants as a group of mature believers.

The training program lasted eight weeks and was comprised of four weekly classes. In week one, twenty participants attended the first Thursday evening class. At the end of the eight-week training program, eighteen participants completed the training. At the first class, the researcher explained in detail the basic requirements of the class. He explained that the attendance was mandatory since the presence of the participants was necessary for the research data to have any significance.

The researcher gave the curriculum³ to the participants and explained to them the material that would be covered in class and would not be due to time limitations. They were also shown a copy of *The Essential Guide to Healing* by Randy Clark as well as *4 Keys to Hearing God's Voice* by Mark Virkler, and encouraged to purchase both for continued study for their own benefit. The researcher explained that these books would serve as good resources for those truly interested in engaging in healing ministry and praying for the sick. They contain some basics on the kingdom of God; its functions and how praying for the sick connects with it.

In week two, the researcher presented part one of a lesson on the foundations for words of knowledge, which is the core of the training program, stressing that both, week two and week three lessons were the loci of this entire project. Defining “words of knowledge” and their operation was the main emphasis this week. This was because of the importance of understanding how words of knowledge and revelatory *charisms*

³ Randy Clark, *Randy Clark Global Awakening Ministry Training Manual*. (Mechanicsburg, PA: Global Awakening, 2011). The curriculum used for classes 1, 3 and 4 was extracted from the training manual. The course material is briefly discussed in this section, but described in more detail in Appendix B.

connect to the glory of God. Those endeavoring to incorporate words of knowledge into their missional practices needed to recognize this aspect.

In week three, the researcher presented various aspects of operating in words of knowledge that focused on the seven ways God gives words of knowledge for healing, four ways of hearing God's voice, and the five-step prayer model for healing. The key dynamic discussed was God communicates to each of His disciples differently. So as a result, learning the different ways He communicates is paramount for increasing the ability to hear and discern His voice and growing in intimacy with Him. He defined intimacy as the positioning of one's heart before the Lord to receive the deep things from the Father's heart.

The class also covered some practical insights for growing in the use of a word of knowledge for healing. Some of these insights included: a word may come quickly, a word may be vague, tempting you to screen it out or ignore it, to resist the thought that a word you have received is not important, or it is just you, that honesty is the best policy and finally do not let fear rob you and those persons of possible healing. At that moment, the researcher demonstrated how to pray with someone using the five-step prayer model. Then time was allotted for the participants to pray for those who needed healing.

In week four, the researcher taught on the doctrine of Impartation and the laying on of hands. There is much to be said in Scripture regarding this doctrine. The researcher of Hebrews writes, "Therefore let us leave the elementary teachings about Christ and go on to maturity, not laying again the foundation of repentance from acts that lead to death, and of faith in God, instruction about baptisms, the laying on of hands, the

resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment. And God permitting, we will do so" (Heb. 6:1-3).

The class also covered the three ways that the Doctrine of Laying on of Hands were practiced. Those three usages were the act of ordination, healing and/or blessing, and for impartation. These were elaborated upon in order to establish a clear biblical precedent for what was expected of the participants. That was simply to pray and lay hands on the sick, as opportunity was made available to them. The class culminated with the researcher praying and laying hands on each participant as they were being preparing to go and spend the next four weeks carrying out what had been taught over the last month.

Over the next four weeks, the focus shifted to the incorporation of words of knowledge into the daily lives of the participants. This was the first official week of the incorporation of words of knowledge. The researcher arranged for a class conference call so that the participants could ask questions and receive further instructions, give testimonies, and report what they had experienced, the previous week. As Jesus sent out his twelve disciples and later seventy-two of His followers, He waited for their reports from their assignment upon their return (Mt. 10:5-10; Lk. 10:1-9). The training program had now entered into this phase for the participants.

The class conference call went as planned and total excitement filled the air. During the call, the researcher gave several words of knowledge and a few participants acknowledged that those words were for them. Prayer was offered for them and testimonies were given as they were touched by the power of God right then. He provided

further encouragement and support and reassured the participants of his availability if they needed or desired it.

During week six, the researcher arranged for yet another class conference call so that the participants could ask questions or get further instructions, give testimonies and report what they had experienced the previous week. This call seemed to be a bit more serious as testimonies were being shared about some real touching scenarios that were being encountered and Holy Spirit seemed to be moving in an unusual way.

Though week seven's class was held on-site, the format was still the same as the previous two weeks had been. The participants could ask questions or get further instructions, give testimonies and report what they had experienced the previous week. The researcher simply facilitated the discussion and interjected where it was needed but allowed the participants to set the agenda based upon their needs. The project was nearing the end and researcher perceived that there was a difference in the body language of the participants from week one until week seven. There was a certain confidence that was brimming from them that was not present during that first class. Again, the researcher ended the class with a corporate prayer and blessings.

A couple of weeks after the last class of week eight, the participants gathered for the final class. Eighteen of the initial twenty participants attended the last Thursday evening class. At the first class, the researcher explained in detail the basic requirements of the class. In week eight, he explained what this class would entail and how it would culminate. Next the participants were asked to submit their composition books that served as their journals during the course of training program. Then the researcher

distributed a post-test to each participant. Thirty to forty-five minutes were given to complete the post-test.

The researcher once again explained that the pre-test previously taken would be compared to that post-test for the purpose of data collection determining the effectiveness of the training. After the post-test, the class moved to café, which was located within the same building as the classroom. The remainder of the class time allowed for sharing of program highlights and testimonials. Food and drinks were served during this time, as the researcher desired to bring finality to the training program within a relaxed atmosphere of fellowship.

As the evening came to a close, several things were done. First, the researcher presented each participant with a five-step prayer model card produced and utilized by Global Awakening. Second, the senior pastor of NLTC say a prayer for me and third, all the participants gathered around me and said prayers of blessings over me, which ended up being a gift to the researcher. The night ended after the blessing. As could be surmised, these experiences with this group from NLTC generated valuable data that is analyzed below.

As the researcher examined the data from the pre-test and post-test, the entries in the participants' journals, and the comments and reflections from the focus group discussions he identified the emergence of four major themes and four sub-themes. The major themes are labeled increased awareness/sensitivity (IA/S), increased boldness/confidence (IB/C), testimony (T), and training efficacy (TE). The four sub-themes were practical experience, advocacy, identity, and intimacy.

Initially, the researcher noticed the immediate emergence of the increased awareness and sensitivity from the pre-test and post-test as well as being consistently shared among the participants during the focus group discussions. This acknowledges an increased awareness or sensitivity to hearing God's voice as well as the manifestation of God's presence around them.

Increased boldness/confidence includes the positive changes to answers in the post-test, journals and focus groups discussions. This specifically addressed the attitude towards willingly stepping out and making oneself available to be used by God to advance His kingdom through healing and deliverance. For sake of this course, faith was defined as R.I.S.K., and was heralded throughout the data collection sources.

Third, the major category labeled testimony included information from the participants' experience of (1) receiving words of knowledge/hearing God's voice, (2) praying for the sick and (3) any other shifts in spiritual growth and development that occurred during this training, as indicated from the post-test, journals and focus group. There are examples of receiving words of knowledge, praying for the sick and having visions and dreams. Many of the testimonies recorded in this section provide some very detailed data describing the various aspects and experiences of prayer ministry.

Finally, Training efficacy details the responses to the post-test questions, journals entries and testimonies shared in the focus groups that signified overall improvements in the lives of the participants.

The four sub-themes were: practical experience, advocacy, identity, and intimacy. Being able to be instructed and immediately apply the material speaks to the very nature

of true biblical discipleship. Jesus stated that his followers were to go and teach others to do what he did. Advocacy means that support grew for having healing ministries within the Church and this reverberated throughout the focus group discussions. That Jesus commissions his disciples and followers to continue his healing ministry today was passionately supported. Identity refers to who the believer is in the context of continuing the healing ministry of Jesus.

The basis of ministry is our identity in Christ as sons and daughters of God, researcherized to minister healing in his name. This is the very foundation, which undergirds and informs every element of the Christian life including healing ministry. A greater joy is learning how to work with God in bringing healing to others. This can only be made possible through a personal growing relationship with the Triune God, which overtly impacted the training program. The themes and sub-themes are often overlapping and interconnected. Therefore, the attempt to separate them completely is somewhat artificial. However, the researcher makes the attempt to give clarity to the data analysis.

Conclusion

The data indicate that a healing ministry training program produced an increase in the participants' effectiveness in healing ministry. During the training program, most participants prayed for more people and some witnessed an increase in healings when they prayed. Participants had a greater understanding of the gift of words of knowledge and exercised it more than before following the training program.

Most participants explained that as a result of the training program, they increased in awareness/sensitivity and/or boldness/confidence that God wanted to use them in healing and deliverance ministry. They wrote and discussed of the profound experiences they encountered with God. Many of the participants were already familiar with these topics covered in the training program, it is clear that the training program impacted their lives to some degree.

The data confirms the theological position that the gift of healing is a part of the church's inheritance. The researcher believes very strongly that the healing ministry is a part of the church's inheritance. This was demonstrated by Jesus and then passed onto to his disciples, followers and subsequently the generations to come; that the healing ministry would be a significant part of the church's life. Undoubtedly, God intended for the miraculous to be a normal part of the disciple's life.

Jesus proved that it was possible to teach and train others to pray for the sick and expect to see positive results. That is not to say or imply that everyone that is prayed for will be healed or delivered; nevertheless, it is to say that all can participate in this ministry. As with all other ministries of the church healing ministry has to be practiced, in order to be effective. There are no shortcuts for this ministry as there are no shortcuts for the others.

The researcher contends that healing ministry and the emphasis on miracles was stripped from the church in a very subtle but effective fashion. Not because God had purposefully ended or ceased from them, but because of a systematic change in the church just merely four hundred years after its birth. This belief is called

cessationism, which has been and continues to be the chief opponent of the supernatural movement of God. The shift from being God-focused to organizational structure, politics, theological manipulation and hierarchical control dismantled the healing ministry and the operation of the charismata as a whole. Less emphasis was placed on the *charisms* and more limitations were added on as to who could actually operate in them.

As the focus of the church shifted to the mainstream and many different individuals were incorporated into it, so were their philosophies. This assimilation did not bode well for the supernatural expressions of God. The more the church rituals and professional clergy became central in its practices, the less miracles, signs and wonders were welcomed. Spiritual hunger was replaced by ambition and greed, which sent the church in a tailspin that lasted for several centuries.

However, it is well documented that throughout church history, groups emerged that still preserved an expectancy for the supernatural power of God to be revealed. They still hungered for a manifestation of heaven on earth. Within church history, different individuals and groups were reported as having divine encounters and sharing those encounters with others through prayer and healing ministry. This often set them against the church systems and laws that were established at the time.⁴ Currently, this is still seen in the contemporary church.

Yet, Holy Spirit has been kindling fires in the hearts of believers down throughout church history and once again is equipping and empowering His followers to demonstrate

⁴ Eddie Hyatt, *2000 Years of Charismatic Christianity* (Grapevine, TX: Hyatt Press, 2014).

the power of the kingdom of God through signs and wonders, healing and miracles. Though there was a period of time when the days were at their darkest for the church and everything that it held sacred was challenged and even dispelled, it persevered. Now in this post-modern period, individuals are once again open to the supernatural and authentic experiences. In an age when rationalism has lost some of its grip over the minds of society, there are opportunities aplenty for the church to reemerge displaying the fullness of a comprehensive salvation that applies to the whole person; mind, body and spirit.

Recommendations for ways to improve the training program emerged from both, participant comments and the researchers own observations. Providing breaks during the teaching/training sessions was mentioned. Though, the researcher did ask the participants during the class sessions about taking breaks; the majority decided to keep going and he followed their lead. The project time constraints on the training program made it easier to acquiesce to the desires of the majority. However, extending the training program would accommodate this element in the curriculum.

The training could have included more role-playing in order to build the confidence of the participants. Practice exercises were done during class sessions but more could have been conducted. This was an area that the researcher believes no amount of role-playing would have been sufficient enough to assuage the participants apprehensions. Getting out of comfort zones always garners this type of apprehension but every effort must be made to reduce as much as possible.

The researcher believes that creating a more thorough succinct curriculum has to become a major priority for the training program. Though many different resources were employed, a more streamlined approach was something that would enhance the training and instructional process, which would increase the participants receptivity and effectiveness. He plans to create his own manuals and training program material in the future.

Finally, the training should be connected to an actual worship service and this should be planned in with the senior pastor assistance. Creating a safe place within local fellowship meetings and gatherings to exercise these gifts are wonderful launching pads into marketplace ministry. This is the researcher's ultimate goal for this training program long-term.

It is the researcher's belief that healing ministry infused within the EMC rubric would have wide-ranging impact upon the church. Areas that would be immediately affected are discipleship, evangelism, church planting and leadership development. Not to mentioned the scores of transformed lives that would be touched as a result of this marriage. Healing ministry has had and will continue to have a significant impact upon those who pray for the sick and those whom have been prayed for. This reality will only grow in the years to come as the church moves to reclaim this aspect of its inheritance.

Alexander Venter summarizes this "inheritance" as it was embodied in John Wimber, who coined the term "practitioners" for Christian healers:

The thought behind it was that every follower of Jesus is called to continue his healing ministry as a spiritual GP (general practitioner). "Practitioner" put the emphasis on practicing healing

not merely analyzing and studying it. Christians are practitioners not theoreticians. The idea of practitioner also raised the fact that every Christian is a general practitioner rather than a specialist healer. Followers of Jesus are GP's in his ministry of healing. We are all spiritual GP's, learning to work with God's power to bring holistic healing to the whole person.⁵

Empowering and equipping the participants and subsequent participants in this regard is the researcher's ultimate goal for the project.

⁵ Alexander Venter, *Doing Healing: How to Minister God's Kingdom in Power* (Cape Town, South Africa: Vineyard International Printing, 2009), 158-159.

APPENDIX A

**OUTLINE OF OPERATING IN WORDS OF KNOWLEDGE
HEALING MINISTRY TRAINING CURRICULUM**

SESSION 1 HEALING MINISTRY & THE GIFTS OF THE SPIRIT

- A. The Identity of Holy Spirit
- B. The Work of Holy Spirit
 - a. Repentance
 - b. Power/Researcherity
 - c. Fruit
- C. The Desire of Holy Spirit
 - a. Fourth Great Awakening
- D. The Gifts of Holy Spirit
 - a. Active today
 - b. Ultimate purpose (Empower)
- E. Salvation “Sozo”
 - a. Healing
 - b. Deliverance
 - c. Salvation, Healing, and Deliverance
- F. Biblical Basis for Ministry to Healing (pg. 37)
 - a. The Revelation of God
 - b. Indication for recognizing the Messiah
 - c. Why Jesus Healed the Sick

- d. Healing ministry of the Early Church
- e. The Commission to Heal for all Disciples

G. The Basis for Healing

- a. The Covenant
- b. The Atonement

SESSION # 2 FOUNDATIONS FOR WORDS OF KNOWLEDGE

- A. A Paradigm Shift
 - a. Ways of God
 - b. Glory of God
 - c. God's Glory Revealed
- B. Faith: The Seedbed for the Miraculous Heb. 11:6
 - a. Hebrew vs. Greek
 - b. Credere
 - c. Three ways God creates faith
- C. A Biblical Illustration Mark 10
 - a. Distinguishing Words of Knowledge John 1:43-52
- D. Principles of the Healing Process
 - a. Healing is instantaneous
 - b. Healing comes with prayer
 - c. Healing is gradual
 - d. Healing comes through prolonged prayer
- E. 80% Concept of Ministering Healing
 - a. Two key facts
 - b. The Issue of Expectation

SESSION # 2 WORDS OF KNOWLEDGE CON'T

- F. Words of Knowledge
 - a. As an opportunity to healing
 - b. Being specific, timing, how to share
 - c. Seven ways of receiving words of Knowledge
 - d. As an aid to evangelism
- G. Foundation for Hearing the Voice God Hab. 2:1-2
 - a. Fix Your Gaze Upon Jesus
 - b. Be Still in His Presence and Share/Open What's On Your Heart
 - c. Recognize Spontaneous Thoughts
 - d. Journal
- H. The Five-Step Prayer Model
 - a. Interview
 - b. Diagnosis and Prayer Selection
 - c. Prayer Ministry: Praying for Effect
 - d. Stop and Re-Interview
 - e. Post-Prayer Suggestions
- I. Practical Insights for Growing in the Use of a Word of Knowledge for Healing
 - a. A word may come quickly
 - b. A word may be vague, tempting you to screen it out or ignore it
 - c. Resist the thought that a word you have received is not important, or it's "just you"

- d. Honesty is the best policy & don't let fear rob you and person of possible healing

SESSION # 3 IMPARTATION AND THE LAYING ON OF HANDS

- A. The Priesthood of All Believers
 - a. 1 Peter 2:9
- B. The Biblical Foundation for Impartation
 - a. Old Testament Impartation
 - b. New Testament Impartation (John 20:22; Rom 1:11)
 - 1. The Act of Ordination
 - 2. Healing and/or Blessing
 - 3. Impartation
- C. Pressing In: How to Receive Impartation
 - a. Become aware of personal inadequacy
 - b. Desire spiritual condition to change
 - c. Desire to honor God with our life
 - d. Just receive it
- D. Signs of the Anointing
 - a. Crying begins
 - b. Laughter begins
 - c. Shaking begins
 - d. May feel, fire, heat, electricity or tingling in hands/body parts
- E. Go Use It!!!

APPENDIX B

PRE-TEST AND POST-TEST RATIONALE

OPERATING IN WORDS OF KNOWLEDGE
HEALING MINISTRY CLASS PRE-TEST QUESTIONNAIRE

Name _____ Date _____
Email _____ Phone _____

- 1 How would you describe your prayer/devotional life?
2. What does worship mean to you?
3. Do you see yourself as a minister?
4. In your opinion, is everyone called to minister? Why
5. Define grace. What does grace mean to you?
6. Do you see yourself as having the power (ability) to affect change in your life?
7. Do you see yourself as having the power (ability) to affect change in the lives of others?
8. Do you see yourself as having the power (ability) to affect change in the world?
9. How many times in the last 30 days have you prayed for the sick with the laying on of hands?
10. What percentage of the time do you see people healed as a result of your prayers?
11. If you have one word/phrase to describe this experience it would be?
12. How would you define a “word of knowledge”?
13. What does salvation mean to you?
14. What does the phrase “spiritual oppression” mean to you?
15. Do you see any benefits of you having an effective healing ministry? If yes, what are some?

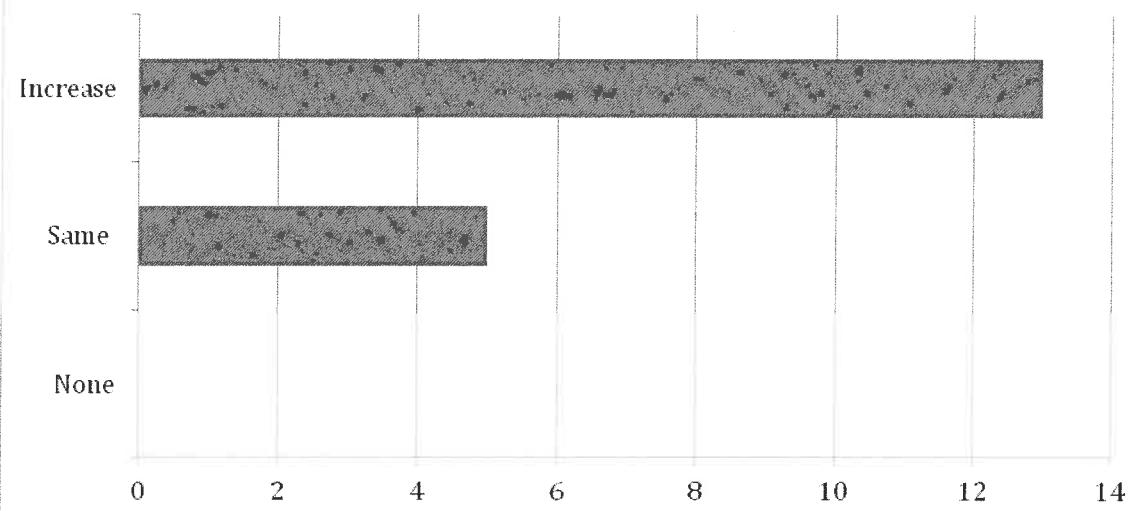
**OPERATING IN WORDS OF KNOWLEDGE
HEALING MINISTRY CLASS POST-TEST QUESTIONNAIRE**

Name _____ Date _____
Email _____ Phone _____

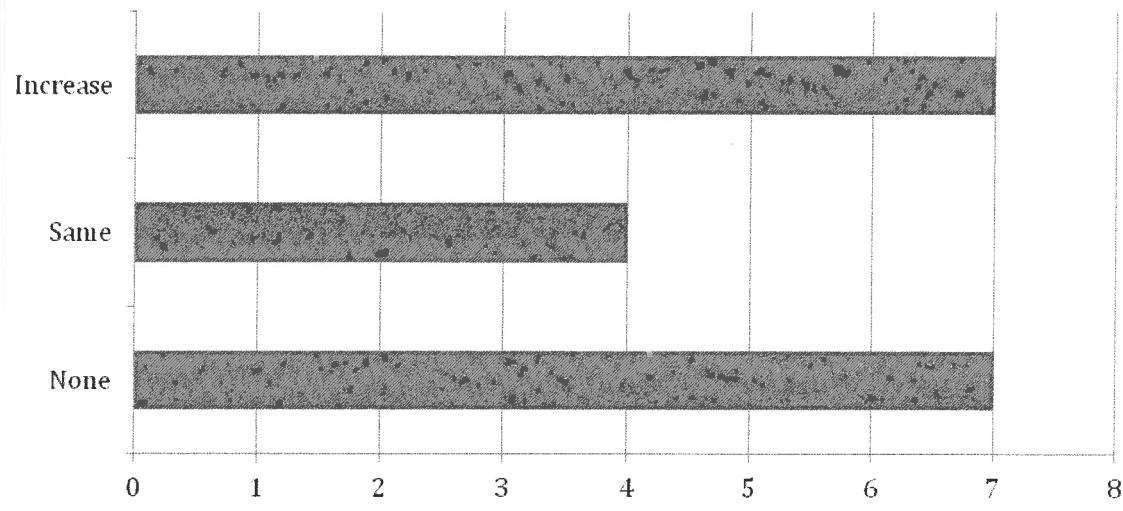
- 1 How would you describe your prayer/devotional life?
2. What does worship mean to you?
3. Do you see yourself as a minister?
4. In your opinion, is everyone called to minister? Why
5. Define grace. What does grace mean to you?
6. Do you see yourself as having the power (ability) to affect change in your life?
7. Do you see yourself as having the power (ability) to affect change in the lives of others?
8. Do you see yourself as having the power (ability) to affect change in the world?
9. How many times in the last 30 days have you prayed for the sick with the laying on of hands?
10. What percentage of the time do you see people healed as a result of your prayers?
11. If you have one word/phrase to describe this experience it would be?
12. How would you define “word of knowledge” in a healing situation?
13. What does salvation mean to you?
14. What does the phrase “spiritual oppression” mean to you?
15. Do you see any benefits of you having an effective healing ministry? If yes, what are some?
16. What was most helpful to you in the healing ministry class?
17. Have you grown spiritually as a result of the healing ministry class? How?
18. How do words of knowledge affect healing ministry impact of those who are prayed for?
19. How has praying for the sick affected your spiritual development?
20. What aspect of the healing ministry training has had the greatest impact on you?
21. What aspect of the ministry training could have been improved?

APPENDIX C
COMPARATIVE BAR GRAPHS

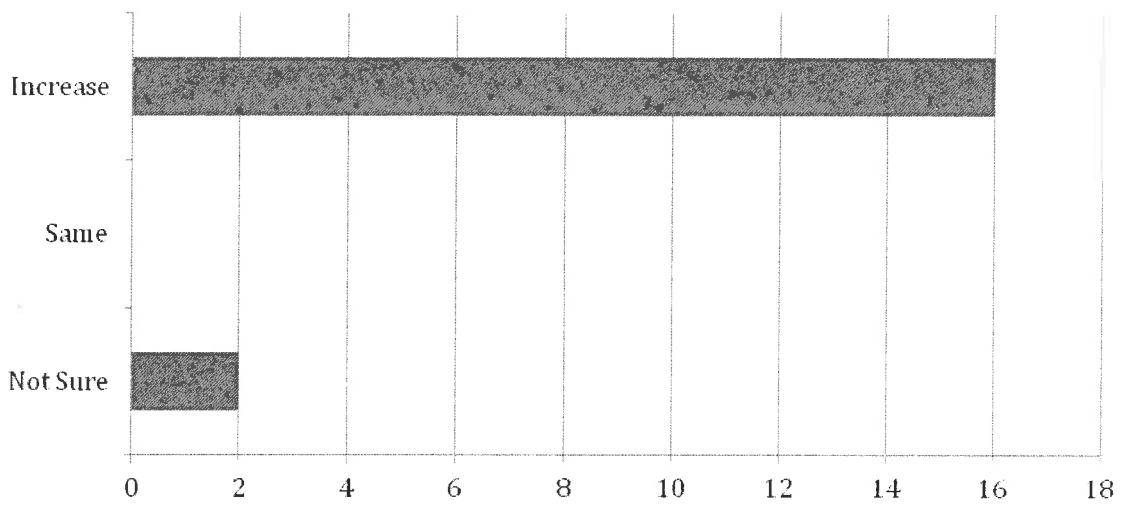
**Table 1: Number of People Prayed for
(Question #9)**



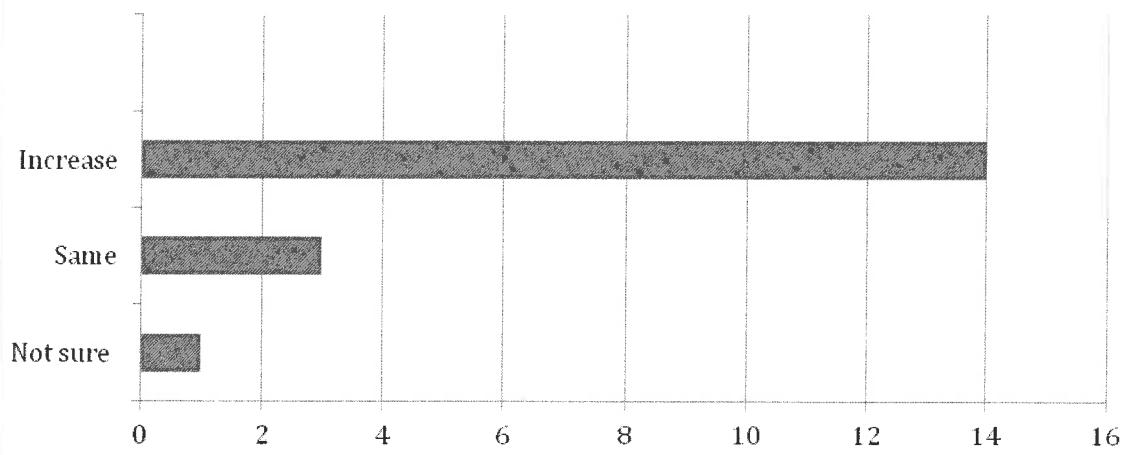
**Table 2: Percentage of People Healed
(Question # 10)**



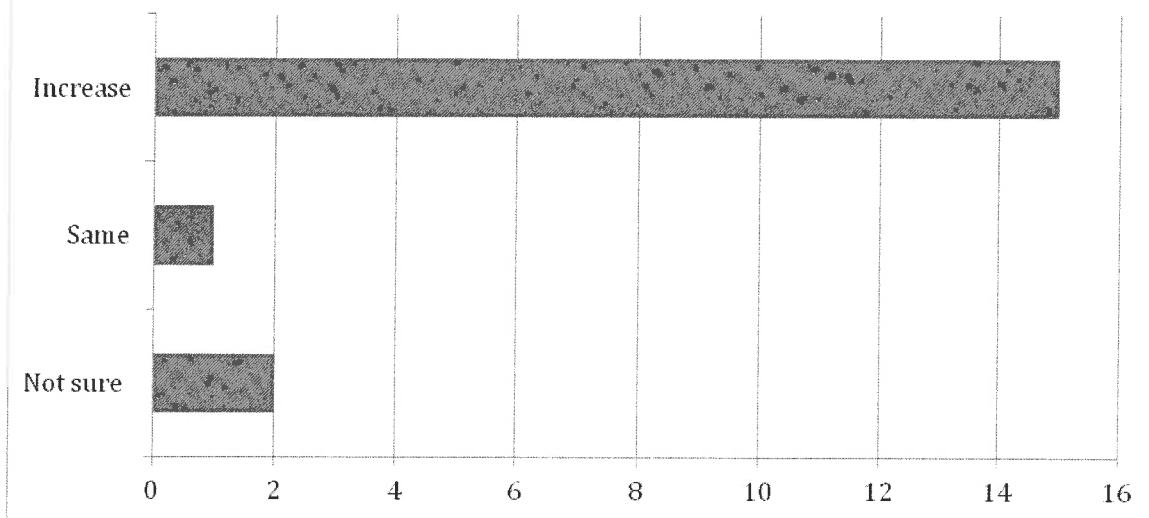
**Table 3: Increase Faith for Healing
Ministry (Question #15)**



**Table 4: Increase Ability
Discerning/Hearing Voice of God
(Question #16)**



**Table 5: Increased Spiritual Growth
(Question #17)**



APPENDIX D
PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Doctor of Ministry Project for United Theological Seminary

TITLE OF STUDY: Speaking To Dry Bones: The Missional Church Operating in Words of Knowledge

RESEARCHER: Howard Roberts

INTRODUCTION: I understand that I have been asked to participate in a discipleship study about incorporating in Words of Knowledge into my daily life, which involves learning to be aware of and sensitive to the direction of Holy Spirit both personally and as a group.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE STUDY

I will be asked to:

- Complete a Pre-Test at the beginning of the process.
- Participate in the four-week training curriculum.
- Participate in-group discussions by sharing stories, testimonies, and experiences of the impact of the training.
- Participate by maintaining a journal for eight weeks, which will be handed in at the end of the process.
- Complete a Post-Test at the end of the process.

During the focus group or any personal interviews an audio recording may be used to help accurately record data.

CONFIDENTIALITY

It has been explained to me that the information I provide will be kept confidential. Data will be stored securely and will be made available only to persons conducting this study. No reference will be made in oral or written reports that could link me to the study. Your name and personal identity will not be associated specifically with any of the data gathered for this project.

Any recorded audio will be disposed of following the completion of the study.

VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION

I understand that my participation in this study is voluntary. I may decline to participate without any penalty. If I decide to participate, I may withdraw from the study at anytime without penalty, however completion is fully advised for quality results of the project. Likewise, the researcher without regard to my consent may terminate my participation.

CONTACT INFORMATION

If I have any questions about the study, about my rights as a participant in the study, or experience any unusual or unexpected discomfort from participating in this study, I may contact: The researcher – Howard Roberts at hroberts@united.edu or by phone at 513-967-7348 or the researcher's mentor at United Theological Seminary jruthven1@united.edu

CONSENT

When I sign my name, this means that I agree to participate in this study, that all of my questions have been answered, and that I am at least 18 years old. I have also been given a copy of this form.

Name: _____ Date: _____
(Print)

Signature: _____

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